THE MENTORING EXPERIENCE FOR WOMEN LEADERS IN FLORIDA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES

By

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The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the experience of the mentoring relationship for women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges. In particular, the focus was to examine the phenomenon of mentoring for the leaders as both mentors and protégés.

This study was conducted in three phases. First, a closed-ended questionnaire was mailed to each woman administrative leader coded 01 Executive in the Florida Division of Community Colleges Annual Personnel Report (n = 77). Positions in this category include president, vice president, associate vice president, and provost. In addition to providing demographic information, leaders were surveyed to determine the extent of their experience with mentoring relationships as protégés and mentors and the impact of those experiences on their career development. Fifty-two surveys were analyzed for a 67.5% response rate. Next, a purposeful sample was chosen from respondents indicating a willingness to participate in the interview phase and who had

experienced mentoring relationships both as mentor and protégé. Utilizing maximum variation sampling, participants were selected to ensure inclusion of important contextual information such as institution size, region, position, age, and ethnicity. Finally, in-depth, personal interviews were conducted with six women administrative leaders chosen for the final sample. Findings were based on analysis of the responses from the questionnaire and interviews relating to the six major research questions and were organized as follows: extent of mentoring experience as protégés and mentors, effect of mentoring on career development as protégés and mentors, and benefits and limitations of mentoring as protégés and mentors.

The conclusions derived from this study are (a) mentoring was a critical factor in the career development of women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges, (b) mentors can be primary or supplemental, (c) organizational role of the mentor is a critical factor in the career development of the protégé, (d) interpersonal support is a key feature of effective mentoring relationships, (e) gender may not affect career development functions but may affect psychosocial aspects of the relationship, (f) women leaders who were mentored feel responsibility to mentor, and (g) formal mentoring programs may lack natural selection and interpersonal support key to effective mentoring.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

More than three decades have passed since the enactment of affirmative action laws in the United States. Despite entry into the work force in record numbers and despite affirmative action legislation and education, women today remain underrepresented in top organizational leadership positions. In 1996, women made up 46% of the labor force and 44% of the total number of persons employed in executive, administrative, and managerial positions (U.S. Department of Labor, 1997). However, the top executive positions in business and industry continue to be dominated by males with only 3% to 5% of these positions held by women (Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995).

Women remain in the minority in leadership positions in Florida as well. A research project that examined the participation of women in leadership roles in the public and private sector institutions in Florida found that women held 19% of all leadership positions surveyed in the private sector. In this same report, the findings were similar for the public sector with men holding the majority of leadership positions in state government, economic development boards, and education (Florida Women's Consortium, 2000).

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting discrimination in employment was extended to include all educational institutions. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 was enacted to prohibit sex discrimination in all

federally assisted education. Women's participation in higher education has steadily increased over the past decade and they comprised the majority of the higher education enrollment in 2000 at 56% of the total. Women make up an even larger share of the community college enrollment at 58% of the total headcount (Phillippe, 2000). Women also hold the majority of full-time positions in higher education. In 1999, 53% of staff employed in higher education were women (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2001). Still, higher education administration remains largely a white male enterprise, suggesting that the talent pool is not being fully utilized. The National Center for Education Statistics data indicate that women have yet to reach parity with men in executive, administrative, and managerial positions. In 1999, women held 53% of all staff positions while the majority of executive, administrative, and managerial positions in higher education were held by men (NCES, 2001).

The leadership gap appears to have narrowed in recent years in community colleges in the United States. In 1991, only 11% of community college presidents were women compared to 28% in 2001 (Weisman & Vaughan, 2001 p.1). However, while 55% of the full-time staff positions are held by women in two-year colleges, a recent study by the American Council on Education concludes that, as in higher education administration as a whole, the majority of community college leadership positions are still held by white males (NCES, 2001; Ross & Green, 2000).

Florida parallels the nation in the status of women in administrative positions in community colleges. The Florida Division of Community Colleges documents that while women were the majority of the student body and earned the greatest number of degrees, female faculty continued to be in the minority on their campuses. In 2001, women represented 47% of persons employed in executive, administrative, and management

positions in community colleges (Florida Division of Community Colleges, 2002). However, as in business, industry, and higher education, men continue to dominate the majority of the top executive positions in Florida's community colleges. The most recent report of the Florida Division of Community Colleges reveals that fewer than 38% of the executive leadership positions in Florida's community colleges are held by women (Florida Division of Community Colleges, 2003). As of this writing, only three of the twenty-eight community college presidents in Florida are women.

Legislation enacted in 1992 requires that each Florida public community college develop a plan for increasing the number of women in senior-level administrative positions. The Community College System Equity Accountability Program Act compels community colleges in Florida to seek the most effective strategies in meeting the demands of this legislation.

Leadership development has become an issue of increasing importance for community colleges. Weisman and Vaughan (2001) report that over the next ten years, nearly 80% of community college presidents will retire. Recent studies of community college leaders at other levels of administration indicate that individuals in the traditional leadership pipeline are also planning to retire in the next several years leaving fewer people to fill the anticipated vacuum (Shults, 2001). The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) expressed concern that "with the retirement of these leaders, inestimable experience and history, as well as an intimate understanding of the community college mission, values, and culture, will disappear, leaving an enormous gap in the collective memory and the leadership of community colleges" (Shults, 2001, p. 2). Boggs (2002) suggests that the continued success of community colleges "depends on the quality and characteristics of their future leadership." He urges community college

presidents and chancellors to view the "development of a new generation of leaders as an integral component of his or her job" (Boggs, 2002, p. viii). Campbell (2002) recommends that community college trustees commit and invest in leadership development and advises community college presidents to establish the professional development of the institution's faculty and staff as a priority for the president's cabinet and leadership team. Some writers argue that this potential leadership void in community colleges provides opportunities to create and develop more inclusive administrations along with the challenges (McClenney, 2001; Weisman & Vaughan. 2001). As community colleges prepare for meeting the challenges and opportunities of developing potential leaders, it could be a critical time to address the disparities in leadership for women and minorities. McClenney states, "Given the changing face of America—more particularly, the demographics of current and future community college students—there could hardly be a need more pressing than the development of leaders who embrace diversity as a strength; who insist that diversity be reflected in college culture and personnel; who demonstrate forthrightness and skill in addressing diversity issues; and who are themselves diverse" (McClenney, 2001, p. 25).

Addressing this disparity in leadership while simultaneously addressing the impending leadership vacuum is the fundamental issue. Mentoring has been cited in the literature as an important aspect of personal and career development for both business and higher education (Kanter, 1993; Levinson et al., 1978; Sheehy, 1976; Zey, 1984). For women mentoring may be an especially important career development strategy.

Amey and VanDerLinden (2002) examined the career paths, backgrounds, and professional development mechanisms of senior community college administrators utilizing data from a 2000 national survey. Positions surveyed included those in the

traditional presidential leadership pipeline such as chief academic officer and chief student affairs officer as well as those in more non-traditional pathway positions such as continuing education directors, occupational and technical administrators and business, industry and economic development administrators. Among the findings, more than 56% of the survey respondents indicated that they had mentors and 36% reported that a mentor assisted them in obtaining their current position. In addition, 60% reported being actively involved in a mentoring relationship with a protégé. In all areas of mentoring surveyed, women indicated more involvement than men in mentoring activities (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002).

Statement of the Problem

Community colleges nationwide are facing the challenge of an impending leadership void over the next decade created by the projected retirements of presidents and others in the traditional leadership pipeline (McClenney, 2001; Shults, 2001; Vaughan & Weisman, 2001). As a result, leadership development has emerged as a major issue and focus for community colleges at the national, state, and local levels (Boggs, 2002; Campbell, 2002; McClenney, 2001). With this challenge comes the opportunity to address the disparities in leadership for women and minorities (McClenney, 2001; Vaughan & Weisman, 2001).

In Florida, the Community College System Equity Accountability Act provides additional impetus for community colleges to address the impending leadership challenges with strategies that promote leadership development for women and minorities.

The individual benefits of mentoring for career and professional development have been well documented. However, relatively little research has been conducted as to

how women serving in community college leadership experience mentoring relationships both as a protégé and a mentor. More needs to be learned about the experience of mentoring in career and professional development, both as protégés and mentors, for women community college administrative leaders.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the experience of the mentoring relationship for women administrative leaders serving in Florida's public community colleges. In particular, the focus of the study was to examine the phenomenon of mentoring for the women leaders as both mentors and protégés. This study also examined the extent of mentoring experience as mentors and protégés, the effect on career development, and both the benefits and limitations of the mentoring relationships.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the design and scope of this study:

- To what extent (frequency, duration, and number of mentors) have women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges been mentored? Who has mentored them (gender, ethnicity, and organizational role) and what does the mentoring experience mean for them as a protégé?
- How has their mentoring experience as protégé affected the career development of women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges?
- What are the benefits and limitations of the mentoring relationship as a protégé?
- To what extent (frequency, duration and number of protégés) are women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges mentoring others? Who are they mentoring (gender, ethnicity, and organizational role) and what does the mentoring experience mean for them as the mentor?
- How has their mentoring experience as a mentor affected the career development of women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges?
- What are the benefits and limitations of the mentoring relationship as a mentor?

Definitions

For the purposes of this study, the following terms are operationally defined:

Career development is both the lateral and upward progression in an individual's profession and the factors influencing this progression. Development specifically refers to an increase in personal and professional skills as well as to an increase in job related responsibilities. Characteristic competencies and skills acquired by college practitioners during career development can include the following: visionary, task giver, motivator, figurehead, liaison, monitor, disseminator, spokesperson, entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator, and negotiator (Roueche, Moore, & Phelps, 1994 as cited in Darby, 1996).

Community college administrative leaders are persons with college-wide responsibility for the management of an institution with titles such as president, executive vice president, vice president, provost, campus president, and dean (if there is no level of authority between dean and president). In the Florida Community College System, persons classified as 01 Executive, Administrative, and Managerial (EAM) meet this definition.

A mentor is a more experienced, usually higher-ranking individual who aids in the professional development and career development of a person beyond normal supervisory guidance.

A mentoring relationship is a relationship, either formal or informal, between an individual (protégé) and a more senior member of an organization (mentor) that is characterized as providing both career and psychosocial benefits to the individual.

A protégé is an individual who receives special attention or assistance in professional development and/or career development from other persons or mentors beyond normal supervisory guidance.

Significance of the Study

While the leadership gap appears to have narrowed in recent years, women have yet to achieve parity with men in executive, administrative, and managerial positions in community colleges. In addition, community colleges nationwide are facing an impending leadership crisis. It is anticipated that over the next 10 years, community colleges will face unprecedented retirements of current leaders and a shortage of individuals in the leadership pipeline.

Leadership development strategies designed to meet this projected leadership shortage have moved to the forefront of the national community college agenda. Long acknowledged as an important career and development strategy, mentoring has been cited as a particularly important strategy for women.

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge about the mentoring experience for women in community college leadership. The findings regarding their experiences may be instructive in designing formal mentoring programs tailored to meet women's needs and enhance leadership development strategies.

Limitations

The following are the limitations of this study:

1. This study was limited to full-time women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges that indicate that they have experienced mentoring relationships both as mentors and protégés.
2. This study was limited to the data collected and reported in the 2003 Florida Division of Community Colleges Annual Personnel Report.
3. The interviews conducted in this study were a limited source of data because respondents reported individual their perspectives on and perceptions of the mentoring experience as mentors and protégés.

Overview of the Remainder of the Study

A review of related literature is presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 details the research methodology used in the study. Research design, selection of subjects, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and methods of data analysis are described. Chapter 4 reports and discusses the findings of the study. The summary, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further study are presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

For more than 25 years, mentoring has been researched and discussed in the literature. Major areas of research about mentoring relationships can be found in the human development, business management, and educational literature. The benefits of mentoring relationships for career and professional development, especially for men, have been well documented. Mentoring has proven to be so beneficial that organizations and institutions have increasingly become interested in formalizing the phenomenon.

The literature suggests that mentoring may be an especially important career development strategy for women. However, the literature also suggests that barriers to beneficial mentoring for women exist that may affect the effectiveness of mentoring as a significant career development strategy.

Barriers to Career Advancement

Many factors have been cited in the literature to explain why women have not gained equal access or opportunity in higher education leadership. Barriers identified in the literature have been classified as structural, external, and personal (Herrington, Wright, & Connaway, 1991). Structural barriers include institutional policies and practices such as discriminatory attitudes and practices. External barriers are factors outside the institution but not specifically attributable to the individual. Examples include the conflict between family and career roles and lack of supportive networks for administrative women. Personal barriers include diminished self-esteem, isolation, time constraints and lack of acceptance.

Role of Mentoring

There are two kinds of formative influences that can affect a professional career. These are the role model and the mentor. The role model's influence is basically a passive influence. An individual identifies a role model who possesses the skills or qualities that he or she lacks yet admires and wishes to emulate. A mentor has an active influence on the protégé. The mentor is a person who leads, guides, and advises someone more junior in experience toward personal and career accomplishments (Kram, 1985).

It has also been noted that individuals can also have symbolic mentors such as a noted public figure past or present (Jeruchim & Shapiro, 1992).

Mentoring has been identified in the literature as an especially important career development strategy for women (Granger, 1993; Kaplan et al., 1984; Moore, 1983). Ragins (1989) identified mentoring as essential for women, since mentors can buffer them from discriminatory selection and treatment. To understand how mentors are beneficial for women, it is useful to first define the term. The idea of mentoring first emerges in Homer's *Odyssey*. When King Odysseus was called to fight in the Trojan War he gave his loyal friend Mentor the responsibility of educating and nurturing his son, Telemachus. Mentor was actually Athena, the Goddess of Wisdom, who took the male form in order to be accepted as an appropriate advisor for a king. As a result, Telemachus was educated, given wisdom, carefully nurtured, provided opportunities for experience, and guided by Mentor/Athena. Therefore, in the traditional sense, the term mentor was originally representative of an older and wiser person who was committed to helping develop a younger and less knowledgeable person prepare for life's future work and experiences.

In a study of adult development by Levinson et al. (1978), a mentor can be an individual found in the work setting or in a more personal setting. The mentor serves as a transitional figure for the young adult to move from reliance on his/her parents to reliance on him/herself. According to Levinson et al., the most important function of the mentor is to support and facilitate the young person's vision of the kind of life to lead as an adult.

Mentoring in organizations has been defined as a developmental relationship between an individual (protégé) and a more senior and influential member of the organization (mentor). In the professional setting, the mentor shares knowledge about the organization that can take years to acquire. This can include unwritten practices, idiosyncrasies, rules that can be loosely observed and policies that must be obeyed to the letter. The mentor also widens the exposure of the protégé and reflects direct responsibility for guiding and developing the strong organizational skills of the protégé through the process. Protégés are not only introduced to the right people, they are made more visible by serving on committees or working on projects that can display their talents (Granger, 1993; Moore, 1983; Noe, 1988). According to Ragins (1997), mentoring relationships are distinct from other work relationships in that mentors often use their power to promote the advancement of their protégés within and between organizations.

Organizational researchers, with few exceptions, agree that mentors are necessary for continued professional development. They argue that only rarely do individuals reach an organization's top echelon without the type of assistance that comes with mentoring (Kanter, 1993; Levinson et al., 1978; Missirian, 1982).

Serving as a mentor can also provide important benefits in an adult's life. In Erickson's (1963) Stages of Psychosocial Development, mentoring is an important developmental stage of middle adulthood. In this stage of generativity, a primary concern is to assist the younger generation in developing and leading useful lives. Mentoring can be an important means for adults to leave a lasting impression on the next generation.

Mentoring Functions

Kram (1985) developed two broad categories to describe mentoring functions. Career functions are those aspects of the relationship that enhance career advancement. Examples of career development functions provided to protégés include sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, protection, and assigning challenging projects. Psychosocial functions are those aspects of the relationship that enhance a sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness. Role modeling, acceptance, confirmation, counseling, and friendship are examples of psychosocial functions. The more of these functions the mentor performs, the more beneficial the relationship and for the protégé, the resulting sense of confidence, competency, and accomplishment may lead to higher degrees of career success and effectiveness (Hunt & Michael, 1983; Kram, 1985; Levinson et al., 1978; Noe, 1988; Zey, 1984).

Simeone (1987) identified the important functions of the mentor for aspiring women academic leaders or protégés. First, the mentor introduces and explains the customs, political climate, and expectations of academic leadership. Second, the mentor shares information and wisdom. Third, she or he provides career assistance by making recommendations and promoting the protégé's candidacy with colleagues. Fourth, the

mentor helps the protégé to build a self-image as a legitimate member of the leadership community.

The Negative Side of Mentoring

Research indicates that mentoring has been presented as the answer to all career development problems. Some feel that it has been oversimplified as a relationship that is easily created and maintained. A more realistic and complex view includes the following:

- The primary beneficiary in a mentor relationship is not always to the protégé.
- The mentor relationship is not always a positive experience for both individuals.
- Mentor relationships do not look the same in all work settings.

For the mentor, there is satisfaction and fulfillment in seeing the professional and personal development of the protégé (Burke et al., 1994). Zey (1984) summarizes the benefits of mentoring to the mentor as that the protégé may help the mentor perform his job and may help the mentor's upward movement within the organization.

Researchers also note that an organization's culture either facilitates or inhibits the development of connections that allow for the widest range of career and psychosocial functions (Kram, 1985). Features of the organization, including its culture, the reward system, task design, and performance management systems, affect relationships by shaping individuals' behavior. Kram (1985) asserts that it is essential to understand how an organization's structures and processes influence behavior in order to maintain those features that encourage supportive relationships and to modify those that impede them. If individuals are rewarded for collaborative efforts in their immediate organizations or departments, they are more likely to form enhancing relationships with peers and superiors than if they are rewarded only for individual effort. An organization can perpetuate competitive dynamics, lack of trust and openness, and alienation among

organizational members through a system of rewards that discourages attention to relationship-building activities and only recognizes bottom-line results (Kram, 1985).

Researchers who have investigated the negative aspects of mentoring report a "conceptualization of the mentor-protégé relationship as a power-dependent, dyadic role set with a strong potential for role strain" (Braun, 1990, p. 193). In addition to the possible problems between mentors and their respective protégés, both persons have a variety of other role relationships, which may conflict with the mentor-protégé relationship. For example, when a mentor takes a protégé, imbalances in other relationships may occur. Peers may feel that the protégé has acquired an advantage. Colleagues may not approve, for a variety of reasons, of a mentor's choice or may be suspicious of the motives (Kram, 1985). Other problems include power imbalance, dependency, condescending or domineering behavior and problems resulting from the natural life-span of the relationship.

Mentoring Issues for Women

Moore and Sagaria (1990) stressed the value of mentoring for women's successful entry and early progress in academic careers. However, they recognized that it is often difficult for women to identify same-gender mentors since there are so few women academic administrators available. Braun (1990) notes, in general, men have more access than women to mentoring, men more often mentor men and most women have male mentors. Durnova (1990) found in a study of 212 Texas community college women administrators that 57% had a mentor, and those who experienced mentoring held higher administrative positions than those who did not. Durnova's results also revealed that of those mentored, nearly 63% had a male mentor.

While the shortage of female mentoring can be attributed to the few number of women traditionally found in the highest levels of their profession there still remain special issues for female mentors and protégés. For example, when there are limited numbers of women in top leadership roles, they may be asked to mentor others which takes time away from their own career development and indeed may actually become a risk to their own careers (Collins, 1983; Ragins & Scandura, 1994). Included in the risks of mentoring the commitment of time required for the mentoring relationship, the reputation of the mentor could suffer if the protégé does not perform as expected, and the vulnerabilities that are exposed by the mentor in such an intimate relationship. In addition, female protégés often fail to turn to women leaders for mentoring due to their perceived lack of power and resources (Ragins, 1989). The mentor must possess a certain amount of power in order to effectively advance the career of the protégé and often men hold the most powerful positions in an organization.

In many ways, women's lives are more complicated because of the increased options. Because of this, it can be argued that women are best equipped to provide the support and advice inherent in mentoring relationships to other females (Jeruchim & Shapiro, 1992). Bogart (1989) identified the presence on campus of one or more women mentors who acted as catalysts for change as a critical component in the advancement of women. They described these catalysts or mentors as those who motivate, support, and mobilize other women. In other words, women who included both the career and psychosocial aspects of mentoring in the mentoring relationships provided the most benefit.

Sandler (1992) recognized that professional academic women often have difficulty in obtaining a mentor. Their outsider status prevents them from understanding

how the system works or what is necessary to find a mentor. But women need to learn how to operate in the political system of an organization. Often, women experience organizational politics as draining, destructive, and a waste of time. To be successful, women need to learn how to operate in the political environment so as to observe its values, which they may perceive as "ugly" without fighting against them. A mentor can help synthesize an identity, which does not compromise personal integrity but includes politics as an aspect of the professional role (Pistole, 1994).

In her 1996 national study, Darby found that mentoring may be a critical factor in the career development of women community college leaders. Darby (1996) suggests that community colleges interested in attracting and retaining women in leadership positions must "create a culture receptive and sensitive to mentoring as well as opportunities for mentoring." (Darby, 1996, p.118). This suggests that women's professional development may benefit from formal mentoring programs.

Formal Mentoring Programs

Formal mentoring programs are organized mechanisms for promoting mentoring relationships. Ragins and Cotton (1999) reported that protégés with informal mentors reported that their mentors provided more career development and psychosocial functions than did protégés with formal mentors. While the research shows that informal mentoring relationships result in the greater mentoring benefits and career outcomes, formal mentoring relationships have also been found to be successful (Chao et al, 1992; Johnsrud, 1991;Wunsch, 1994;). The most successful programs are careful to address the major issues in implementing a mentoring program. These issues include selecting a clear operational definition of mentoring in the context of the organization's mission and goals, planning the mentoring process and selecting activities, developing a rationale for

pairing mentors and protégés, securing adequate resources, and evaluating outcomes (Wunsch, 1994). The emphasis in formal mentoring programs moves from a simple view of mentoring as a relationship between two people to a conceptualization of mentoring as a process. According to Wunsch (1994) if mentoring is viewed as a growth process then it can be defined, planned and evaluated.

Organizations utilizing formal mentoring programs stand to benefit in a number of ways. For example, the potential talent of women can be evaluated in a more systematic way through formal mentoring programs (Clutterbuck & Devine, 1987). Mentoring programs can also place organizations in alignment with affirmative action goals and state equity initiatives as well as their own institutional effectiveness plans. As further evidence of the benefits of formal mentoring, Wunsch (1994) notes that Telemachus was involved in a formal mentoring program in as much as King Odysseus orchestrated the relationship between his son and his loyal friend Mentor.

Conclusions

This review of the literature indicates that mentoring is a valuable tool for socializing new members to an organization, including higher education organizations. It also appears to emphasize that women face special problems in obtaining the type of career assistance inherent in the mentoring relationship. Some of the problems women face may be explained in their lack of access to the established male network and the shortage of females in positions of power to serve as mentors. However, the increasing popularity of formal mentoring programs may serve to alleviate some of these problems for women. More research is needed to understand the factors that facilitate and interfere with these developmental relationships.

Also, the research seems to indicate that women themselves have overlooked or misunderstood mentoring relationships (Jeruchim & Shapiro, 1992). Facilitating a greater understanding of the value of the mentoring relationship to women in negotiating organizational politics and overall career advancement may be an important aspect of any formal mentoring program.

Indeed, there is evidence that because women's developmental needs are different than men's, perhaps the male model of mentoring is not as effective for women. More needs to be learned about the mentoring experience for women in community colleges in order to address the particular needs of women and in the process develop valuable leaders for these educational institutions.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the experience of the mentoring relationship for women administrative leaders serving in Florida's public community colleges. The focus of the study was to examine the phenomenon of mentoring for the leaders both as a mentor and a protégé as it has affected their professional lives. The following research questions guided this study:

- To what extent (e.g., frequency, duration, and number of mentors) have women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges been mentored? Who has mentored them (e.g., gender, ethnicity, and organizational role) and what does the mentoring experience mean for them as a protégé?
- How has their mentoring experience as protégé effected the career development of women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges?
- What are the benefits and limitations of the mentoring relationship as a protégé?
- To what extent are women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges mentoring others? Who are they mentoring (e.g., gender, ethnicity, and organizational role) and what does the mentoring experience mean for them as the mentor?
- How as their mentoring experience as mentor effected the career development of women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges?
- What are the benefits and limitations of the mentoring relationship as a mentor?

Rationale for the Method

The purpose and focus of this research was to examine the phenomenon of mentoring experience for women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges. Phenomenology is a qualitative research method that asks the foundational

question, "What is the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of this phenomenon for this person or group of people?" (Patton, 2002, p. 69) A phenomenological study describes the meaning of the lived experiences for individuals who have experienced the phenomenon under study. The experiences of different individuals are bracketed, analyzed, and compared to identify the essence of the phenomenon (Patton, 2002.)

The research questions proposed for this study were most appropriately addressed utilizing qualitative methods that captured and described how women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges experienced mentoring. Qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviewing allowed the researcher to explore how women in community college leadership made sense of the mentoring experience as they have lived it. Analyses of the research data provided the mechanism for basic elements of the mentoring experience that are common to the population studied to be identified (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002).

Sample Selection

This study was conducted in three phases. In phase one, a closed-ended self-administered questionnaire was mailed to each of the women administrative leaders coded 01 Executive as reported in the Florida Division of Community Colleges Annual Personnel Report (n = 77). This category is defined as "All persons who exercise primary college-wide responsibility for the management of an institution" (Florida Community College System Personnel Data Base, 2002, p. 25.) Examples of the positions included in this category are president, executive vice president, vice president, provost, campus president and dean (if college wide authority and if levels between dean and president do not exist). The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine which women community

college administrative leaders were mentored and to determine their perceptions of the mentoring relationship and its impact on their career development. In addition to providing basic demographic information about women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges, the questionnaire also determined if the women were currently mentoring other individuals and if they were willing to participate in an in-depth interview regarding their mentoring experiences.

The initial survey instrument, the Mentoring Questionnaire, utilized in phase one of this study was an adaptation of a closed-ended self-administered questionnaire used in a national study examining the role of mentoring in the career development of women community college administrative leaders. The Informed Consent transmittal letter (Appendix A) and Mentoring Questionnaire (Appendix B) were field tested with a select group of women in Florida community college leadership with modifications made based on their feedback.

The survey package containing the Informed Consent letter, Mentoring Questionnaire, and self-addressed, stamped envelope was mailed to all women coded 01 Executive in the 2002 Florida Division of Community Colleges Annual Personnel Report The initial sample of 77 women community college leaders included three presidents, 32 vice presidents, 19 provosts or campus presidents, 10 associate vice presidents, and 13 deans, directors, or coordinators. In addition to the initial letter, two follow-up messages were sent via e-mail to ensure a higher return rate (Appendix C and D).

In the second phase of the study, a purposeful sample was chosen from the survey respondents who indicated a willingness to participate in the interview phase and who had experienced mentoring relationships both as a mentor and as a protégé. The specific goal of this purposeful sample was to "document unique variations that have

emerged in adapting to different conditions" (Patton, 2002, p. 182). Maximum variation sampling is appropriate when the aim is to capture and describe the central themes that cut across a great deal of variation. The assumption underlying this sampling method is that any central themes that may emerge from this variation will be particularly useful in capturing the core experiences and shared dimensions of a particular setting or phenomenon (Patton, 2002). The focus of this study was to examine the mentoring experiences of women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges and any core experiences that may emerge with variations in institutional size and region, respondent's age, ethnicity, and position. Utilizing maximum variation sampling, the sample for this study was chosen utilizing the following considerations in order to include as much contextual information as possible about the population:

- Institutional size and region of the state
- Rrespondent's position
- Respondent's age
- Rrespondent's ethnicity

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), in naturalistic sampling where the purpose is to maximize information, sampling continues until "no new information is forthcoming from newly sampled units." In this study, sample selection continued to the point of redundancy of the informational considerations in relation to institutional size, respondent's position, age, and ethnicity. Therefore, participants for this study were selected to ensure inclusion of the important contextual variations in the population and the size of the final sample was determined by the informational considerations. The final sample included subjects from small, medium, and large institutions representing the diverse geographical nature of Florida's community college system. The position titles of the subjects included president, vice president, associate vice president, and

provost. The average age and ethnicity of the subjects was representative of the demographics of the respondents.

In the third phase of the study, in-depth, tape-recorded standardized open-ended personal interviews were conducted with the selected subjects in the final sample. The purpose of interviewing is to allow the researcher the opportunity to enter into another person's perspective and "begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit." (Patton, 2002, p. 69). The researcher contacted each of the subjects by telephone to confirm their willingness and availability to participate in the interview phase of this study. Each of the subjects contacted agreed to participate in the interview and an appointment was scheduled at a convenient time and place for the participant. A confirming e-mail message was sent to each subject prior to the scheduled interview.

The interview protocol (Appendix D) was field tested with a select group of women community college leaders in Florida for appropriateness and clarity. The completed interviews were transcribed and the process of inductive data analysis began immediately upon completion of each interview. "Inductive data analysis may be defined most simply as a process for 'making sense' of field data" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 37).

Data Collection

Data collection for this study began with the compilation of the information gathered in the self-administered Mentoring Questionnaire. In addition to providing a demographic picture of women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges, findings regarding the extent to which these women administrative leaders are

participating in mentoring relationships, and the impact on career development are presented in Chapter 4.

In the second phase of the study, the qualitative research method of standardized, in-depth, open-ended interviews will be utilized. The purpose of the interviews was to examine the phenomenon of mentoring as experienced by women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges. Questions included in the interview protocol were designed to collect data about the individual's experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge about the phenomenon of mentoring (Patton, 2002).

The standardized open-ended interviews were conducted in person with the individuals selected for the final sample. During February and March 2003, the researcher traveled to each of the subject's community college and conducted the interview in the subject's office at their preference. At the beginning of each interview, an oral review of the purpose of the interview and a confidentiality statement was provided to each subject. During the interview, the researcher paraphrased, restated, and summarized each subject's responses to the questions. As recommended by Guba and Lincoln (1981), the data could not be interpreted with any degree of accuracy if the subjects misunderstood the interview questions.

The tape-recorded interviews were transcribed, coded, and categorized for analysis by the researcher. Each of the interview transcripts was saved and stored on computer hard drive, diskette, and in hard copy in properly coded notebooks.

Data Analysis

Data analysis began with the compilation of the information gathered from the Mentoring Questionnaire. The following information was examined and the findings are reported for the population in Chapter 4:

- Organizational position of respondents, number of years in position, community college administration, and education in general.
- Age, ethnicity, and institutional size and region.
- Mentoring experiences of women administrative leaders as protégés.
- Organizational rank, age, gender, and ethnicity of their mentor.
- Mentoring experiences of women administrative leaders as mentors.
- Organizational rank, age, gender, and ethnicity of their protégé.
- Length of each type of mentoring relationship.
- The types of career and professional development help provided.

Data analysis of the standardized, open-ended personal interviews began upon the completion of each interview. The researcher transcribed each individual interview verbatim to prepare for the initial process of unitizing and categorizing the data. The transcription process helped immerse the researcher in the interview data. Each of the transcribed interviews were read again while listening to the corresponding audiotape to ensure the accuracy of the transcription and to enhance the researcher's understanding of the subject's individual experience. Once all of the interviews were completed, the transcribed interviews were processed utilizing the method of content analysis. Patton (2002) describes content analysis as an inductive process of searching text for recurring words or themes. This inductive analysis involves discerning patterns, themes, and categories that emerge from the data rather than identified prior to data collection (Patton, 2002). While analyzing the interview data, the researcher conformed with the constructs of qualitative research and attempted to discover the emergent themes and patterns of the mentoring experience for the subjects.

The specific process used to discover the emergent themes of the mentoring experience for the subjects began by coding the individual interviews. This involved multiple readings of the transcription, color-coding, highlighting, or bookmarking passages relevant to the mentoring experience, and beginning the process of identifying

themes. The computer software Microsoft Word was utilized to assist in data management.

Once each of the individual interviews was processed, the researcher compared the recurrent themes and categories that had emerged in each interview and searched for commonalities and differences. This process continued until the categories had been saturated and the data could be organized in four major themes and one to three constructed categories within each theme. The findings of this inductive data analysis are presented in a descriptive format in Chapter 4.

Reliability, Validity, and Generalizability

Triangulation as a procedure for enhancing the validity of a qualitative study is well documented (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). An approach to analytic triangulation involves having those who were interviewed review the findings and conclusions for accuracy, completeness, and fairness (Patton, 2002). This study maximized the validity and credibility of the findings by providing interviewees the opportunity to judge the accuracy, fairness, and validity of the research data analysis (Appendix F).

Generalizability of the findings of this research is most confidently possible to applications where the settings and populations are most similar to those in this research. Findings that continue to hold over the contexts included in the informational considerations used in the maximum variation sampling method of this study may be generalized to similar populations.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research study was to examine the experience of the mentoring relationship for women administrative leaders serving in Florida's community colleges. In particular, the focus of the study was to examine the phenomenon of mentoring for the women leaders as both mentors and protégés. In addition, this study examined the extent of the mentoring experience as mentors and as protégés, the effect of these relationships on career development, and both the benefits and limitations of the mentoring relationships.

In this study, an initial closed-ended questionnaire was mailed to 77 women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges. From the respondents, a purposeful sample of six community college leaders was chosen utilizing a maximum variation sampling process to participate in in-depth personal interviews regarding their mentoring experiences.

The results of this research are presented in two parts. The first part consists of a detailed summary of the data obtained from the initial questionnaire. In addition to demographic data for the population, this summary includes information regarding the extent of the mentoring experiences for women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges first as protégés and then as mentors. The second part presents the findings that resulted from the analysis of the in-depth interviews. Quotations from the interviews are presented verbatim as transcribed but are presented without any reference to the subject to protect confidentiality.

Results of the Initial Questionnaire

The initial sample consisted of 77 women administrative leaders coded 01 Executive as reported in the 2002 Florida Division of Community Colleges Annual Personnel Report. The initial sample of 77 included women serving in Florida's public community colleges as presidents, vice presidents, provosts, associate vice presidents, and deans. Of the 77 questionnaires mailed, 56 were returned (72.7% return rate). Of the 56 questionnaires returned, one was not usable because the administrator was no longer with the community college, and three administrators declined to participate in the study. Therefore, 52 questionnaires were returned and analyzed for this study resulting in a 67.5% response rate.

Twenty-seven (51.9%) of the respondents were from large multi-campus institutions, 19 (36.5%) were from medium single or multi-campus institutions, and six (11.5%) were from small single or multi-campus institutions. The average age of the respondents was 51.69 years. Thirty-eight (73.1%) of the research participants were Caucasian, nine (17.3%) were African-American, one (1.9%) was Hispanic, one was Native American, one was Asian, and two (3.8%) of the respondents did not report their ethnicity. Twenty-three (44.2%) of the respondents held the position title of vice president, 10 (19.2%) associate or assistant vice presidents, eight (15.4%) were provosts, six (11.5%) campus presidents, two (3.8%) were presidents, two (3.8%) directors, and one (1.9%) held the position of dean. The respondents reported an average of 22.1 years of experience in higher education, an average of 14.6 years in community college administration, and reported serving in their present positions for an average of 3.7 years. Forty-nine (94.2%) of the respondents reported experiencing one or more mentoring relationships.

Mentoring Relationships as Protégés

Overall, 41 of the 52 respondents (78.9%) reported experiencing a mentoring relationship as a protégé. Of the 41 respondents reporting having experienced mentoring as a protégé, 39 (95.1%) indicated that at the initiation of the relationship, the mentor was an individual of a higher organizational rank. One respondent indicated their mentor was someone of the same organizational rank and one indicated their mentor was someone in a lower organizational rank.

Mentor Age, Gender, and Ethnicity

Thirty-five (85.4%) of the respondents reported having a mentor who was older, four (9.8%) indicated they were older than their mentor, one reported she and her mentor were the same age, and one respondent did not report their respective ages. The average age of the mentors for these respondents was 46.3 years and the protégés average age was 34.2 years. Therefore, there was an average of 11.4 years age difference for the protégés and their mentors.

Twenty-seven of the 41 respondents (65.9%) indicated a cross-gender mentoring relationship. Fourteen women (34.1%) indicated that their mentor was female.

For the 41 respondents reporting a mentoring relationship as a protégé, the ethnicity of the mentor was indicated as follows: 32 (78%) were Caucasian, five (12.2%) were African-American, two (4.9%) were Hispanic, and one (2.4%) was Asian. The ethnicity of the protégés in these mentoring relationships is as follows: 28 (68.3%) were Caucasian, nine (21.9%) were African-American, one (2.4%) was Hispanic, one was Native American and two did not report ethnicity. Thirteen (31.7%) reported a diversified mentoring relationship. In the 32 mentoring relationships where the mentor was Caucasian, 21 (65.6%) were males and 11 (34.4%) were female. Overall, in 51.2 %

of the mentoring relationships where the respondents were protégés, the mentors were Caucasian males. For the nine African-American respondents the mentor ethnicity was as follows: three (33.3%) were Caucasian males, two (22.2%) were African-American males, one was a Hispanic male, one a Caucasian female, and one an African-American female.

Relationship Initiation

The respondents were asked to indicate who initiated the mentoring relationship with them as protégés and 28 (68.3%) women indicated that the relationship "just happened." For 11 (26.8%) of the women, the mentor initiated the relationship and in two cases (5%), the protégé initiated the relationship. None of the respondents reported developing their mentoring relationships as a protégé within a formal mentoring program.

Relationship Benefit and Status

Three fourths of the respondents indicated that their mentor strongly impacted their career development. Ten (24.4%) indicated that their mentor had somewhat impacted their career development.

For 33 (80.5%) of the respondents, their relationship with their mentor was reported to have evolved into a relationship where they viewed each other as peers and colleagues or had ended.

Career Development

The following were four areas of career and professional development where more than 75% of the respondents indicated their mentors had made a significant impact:

- Encouraged me to understand the politics of the organization (98.7%).
- Challenged me to develop the skills and competencies for the next immediate step by assigning tasks and responsibilities challenged me to develop the skills and

competencies for the next immediate step by assigning tasks and responsibilities to me beyond my organizational scope (85.4%).
- Helped me to gain visibility in our organization (82.9%).
- Provided emotional support and personal advice (78%).

In addition, 61% of the respondents reported that their mentor encouraged them to pursue an advanced degree, 36.6% reported that their mentor helped them to recognize personal failure patterns and how to overcome those, and 31.7% indicated that their mentor nominated them for special recognition and awards within and outside the organization.

Mentoring Relationships as Mentors

Forty-nine of the 52 respondents (94.2%) in this study reported that they had experienced a mentoring relationship as a mentor. Of the 49 respondents indicating their involvement in a mentoring relationship as a mentor, 24 (48.9) indicated that their protégé was one level lower in the organization, 24 respondents indicated that their protégé was more than level lower in the organization. One respondent reported that she and her protégé held the same organizational rank.

Protégé Age, Gender, and Ethnicity

When the mentoring relationship began, the average age of the respondents was 43.8 years and the protégés average age was 34.4 years. Thus, there was an average age difference of 9.4 years. Thus, women are developing mentoring relationships as mentors 2.5 years earlier than their own mentors.

Thirty-nine (79.6%) of the respondents reported that their protégé was female. Ten (20.4%) respondents reported they were involved in a cross-gender mentoring relationship.

For the 49 respondents reporting a mentoring relationship as a mentor, the ethnicity of the protégé was indicated as follows: 29 (59.2%) were Caucasian, 10

(20.4%) were African-American, 9 (18.4%) were Hispanic, and one did not indicate the ethnicity of her protégé. Twenty-two (44.9%) of the protégés were Caucasian females, 9 (18.4%) were African-American females, 8 (16.3%) were Hispanic females, 7 (14.3%) were Caucasian males, one was an African-American male, one was an Hispanic male, and one did not indicate the ethnicity of her male protégé.

Thirteen of the 29 Caucasian females who were involved in mentoring relationships as both protégé and mentor reported that their protégés were Caucasian females (44.8%), 6 were Hispanic females (20.7), 5 were Caucasian males (17.2%), 4 were African-American females (13.8%), and one was an Hispanic male. Therefore, 20.7 % of these respondents were involved in cross-gender mentoring relationships and 34.5% were involved in diversified mentoring relationships.

Of the nine African-American females indicating they were serving as a mentor, the gender and ethnicity of their protégés is as follows: five were African-American females (55.6%), two were Caucasian females (22.2%), one was a Caucasian male (11.1%) and one was an African-American male. Therefore, 22.2% of these respondents were involved in cross-gender mentoring relationships and 33.3% were involved in diversified mentoring relationships.

Relationship Initiation

For 22 (44.9%) of the respondents, their mentoring relationships with their protégés "just happened." Twenty (40.8%) of the respondents indicated that they initiated the relationship, four (8.2%) of the mentoring relationships were initiated by the protégé, and three (6.1%) indicated that their mentoring relationship developed as part of a formal program.

Relationship Benefit and Status

Twenty-four (48.9%) of the respondents reported having strongly impacted the career development of their protégés and 23 (46.9%) reported having somewhat impacted the career development of their protégés. Overall, 87.8% of the respondents reported that serving as a mentor had had a positive effect on their own professional development, while six (12.2%) indicated their mentoring relationships had had both positive and negative effects.

For 49% of the respondents, the mentoring relationship with their protégés was between 2 and 5 years old with a deepening bond and frequent interaction. Sixteen (32.6%) of the respondents reported that their relationships had changed or ended in the previous 6 months to 2 years. Five (10.2%) of the respondents indicated that the relationship had evolved into a peer relationship or had ended and one indicated that the mentoring relationship had changed or ended because it was no longer a satisfying relationship.

Career Development

The 49 respondents serving as mentors described the ways in which they impacted their protégés career and professional development in the following four significant ways:

- Helped and encouraged them to understand the politics of the organization (91.8%).
- Challenged them to develop skills and competencies for the next immediate step by assigning tasks and responsibilities beyond their organizational scope (87.7%).
- Provided emotional support and personal advice (85.7%).
- Helped them gain visibility in our organization (77.5%).

In addition, 69.4% of the respondents reported that they encouraged their protégé to pursue an advanced degree, 53.1% indicated they helped their protégé to recognize and overcome personal failure patterns, and 51% reported they had nominated their protégé for special recognition and awards within and outside the organization.

The second part of this chapter presents the data and findings obtained from the interviews conducted with the six subjects in the final sample. The final subjects interviewed included one president, three vice presidents, one provost, and one associate vice president. The average age of the interview subjects was 54.3 years. Four (66.6%) of the interview subjects were Caucasian, one was African-American, and one was Native American. Three of the interview subjects were from medium single or multi-campus community colleges, two were from large multi-campus community colleges, and one was from a small community college.

As in the first part, the findings are presented first as they relate to the administrative leaders mentoring experiences as protégés followed by their experiences as mentors. The research findings for the following part are presented in the form of the four major themes that emerged from an analysis of the interview data and correspond to the research questions posed in the study. These themes are consistent for the mentoring experiences both as protégé and mentor and are: the extent of mentoring, the quality of the mentoring experience, the effect on career development, and the benefits and limitations of the mentoring relationships.

Extent of Mentoring

While each of the interview subjects was provided definitions of the mentoring terminology used in the Mentoring Questionnaire and Interview Protocol, each of the subjects was also asked to provide her own definition of a mentoring relationship. The

defining questions used in this study were: "Have you been guided by a more experienced individual (e.g., a mentor) who aided with your professional and career development beyond normal supervisory guidance?" and "Have you provided guidance to a less experienced individual (e.g., a protégé) in an effort to aid this individual's professional and career development beyond normal supervisor guidance?" Each of the interviewee's definition was a unique reflection of their own experiences and perceptions of mentoring relationships, but each definition contained both the career development and psychosocial functions provided in mentoring relationships. All of the women defined mentors as individuals who provide career-related guidance, assistance, exposure, and visibility. In addition, almost all of the women defined mentors as serving as advisors, counselors, and role models. A theme common in almost all of the definitions was the importance of trust and honesty in a mentoring relationship. One of the interviewees provided the following definition of a mentoring relationship:

> A mentoring relationship is where one person can assist another in developing their career, giving them the exposure they need to different people, events, and places. Opening the door for the protégé and guiding them and advising them. . . . Leading them into the direction they need to go and pulling them out of directions they don't need to go. Pointing out both the good and the bad. And being very honest. I think it is critical to be honest to a protégé. So I think it has to be an honest relationship with a lot of trust.

One woman defined the mentoring relationship in familial terms as someone who, "helps guide a person to the next career step—doesn't have to be a presidency—and gives the wisdom of their experience. Like what you might do with a son or daughter." Still another woman defined a mentor simply as, "a person who can guide and assist in both lessons in life and lessons in career."

Each of the interviewees indicated that while their primary mentoring relationships had begun in the professional setting, all had evolved into lasting

friendships. The average length of these mentoring relationships was 19.3 years. For all but one of the women, the relationship continues with both personal and professional aspects. One woman described her relationship with her mentor today as:

> You know, we're still in contact today. They come visit and spend the night and we go down there. We talk fairly often and when I have problems or concerns that are work-related, I call him. He's still mentoring me. He retired almost 13 years ago and we're still very close. In fact, it's almost easier now that he's retired and I don't work for him anymore. But he continues to mentor me.

For one woman, the relationship only ended when her mentor passed away. However she said his influence continues, she still feels his presence and seeks his guidance by thinking, "what would he do, what would he advise?"

In the initial survey, 41 of the 52 respondents (78.8%) reported experiencing one or more mentoring relationships as a protégé. For the subjects indicating more than one mentor, the average number of mentors helping these leaders was four.

Overall, 95.1% of the respondents reported that their mentor was an individual in a higher organizational position. For the six interview subjects, the mentor was someone in a higher organizational position in all but one case where they were peers. In that case, the individual was someone who had been at the institution for a longer period of time.

Women were the primary mentors for three of the six women in the final sample. Five of the six primary mentors were Caucasian and one was Asian. For the four Caucasian women in the final sample two had Caucasian female mentors, one had an Asian female mentor, and for one the mentor was a Caucasian male. The African-American interviewee had a Caucasian male as her primary mentor, and the Native-American subject's mentor was a Caucasian male. In summary, the interview subjects

experienced less cross-gender and diversified mentoring than reported in the results of the initial survey.

Supplemental Mentors

Each of the women interviewed indicated that more than one mentor had assisted them. These supplementary mentors primarily provided career-related assistance. Almost all of the women interviewed in this study mentioned a supplemental mentor who was a different gender than their primary mentor. For example, a woman leader whose primary mentor was a female, illustrated this value as "getting the male perspective from two different male administrators. Having their male perspective of me and my performance was a different perspective than [my primary mentor] ever gave me so I respected them and their opinion."

Many of the women interviewed described their supplementary relationships as being more mutually beneficial than the relationships they had with their primary mentors. One leader describes her relationship with her supplemental mentor in this way:

> She doesn't hesitate to tell me things, you know, you really need to go to this event; I think it's important that you're there. Or I wouldn't do to that if I were you because this and this is going to happen. I managed her first campaign. Watching her and understanding the political process, I think I learned a lot. And I think I've been helpful to her in some ways. I know I have. . . . we reinforce each other.

Another leader describes her supplemental mentoring relationships in this way:

> There are certainly others who have offered advice and support but nothing to the degree I experienced with my mentor. My president is very supportive but plays a different role. It's more mutually beneficial. If I am successful, my sponsor benefits. With my mentor, the only benefit was to me.

While considered to be supplemental, some of these mentoring relationships were pivotal in the career development of these participants because the mentor identified the

administrative leader's potential and created a vision for a larger professional role. As one participant recalled

> [my mentor] helped me see myself as a person with a career. My initial thought was that I would be a secretary and put my husband through law school . . . but he helped me see that I had skills, potential, and ability to make a bigger contribution and to have a career.

This study found that mentoring relationships are experienced as primary or supplemental. In the primary mentoring relationships the mentor provides both essential career development and psychosocial functions to the protégé. Supplemental mentoring relationships were viewed as important to career development because they provided an important, often different, perspective to the protégé. Supplemental mentoring relationships were also experienced as more mutually beneficial to the mentor and protégé.

Quality of the Mentoring Experience as Protégés

The participants in this study characterized their mentoring relationships with their mentors as among the most meaningful relationships of their lives. The major themes that emerged from the protégés descriptions included providing assistance and guidance in the form of interpersonal support, experiencing gender issues, and life-skill development.

Interpersonal Support

All of the participants spoke fondly of the friendships that developed with their mentors. These friendships ranged from good professional friendships to close personal bonds as in familial relationships. One interviewee described her relationship with her mentors as the following:

> It's somewhat like a long-term friendship but it's not a long-term friendship like with your very best friend that you share everything with. While you have

> personal sharing, there's more of a career note to it. . . . So it's not a girly friendship.

Another participant said,

> At the time, I thought this is a really neat woman who is going to be a good friend. But also, we were the only two high-ranking—other than the president—women administrators. It was a real bond there. We'd face the boys together kind of thing. So it was a friendship, but I knew that I would be looking to her for advice and guidance. I still look to her for advice and guidance and I still look at her as a mentor. . . . So she's still first a friend but also somebody whose guidance and advice I really value.

For some of the participants the personal friendships evolved as the career development aspects of the relationship became more collegial. One woman described her relationship with her mentor in the following way:

> We talked about our kids a lot. I mean we knew each other's families and we knew each other. We didn't really socialize other than in the group that we had kind of this work socialization with. . . . We're colleagues now. We're totally friends and colleagues. We play off each other and we're personal friends now, too.

In the theory of the seasons of adulthood by Levinson et al. (1978), a mentor was seen as serving a critical role in the life of a young adult, and as someone who represents a mixture of parent and peer. For two of the three women participants who were involved in cross-gender mentoring, the relationship with their mentor was described in more familial ways. One of the women described her relationship in this way:

> In [my mentor's] case, he couldn't help but take care of me and I couldn't help playing the role of the daughter—maybe because of the age difference. It was kind of a father-daughter thing. [My mentor] had children around my same age and to this day they call me their sister. I mean, in addition to work-related stuff, he would tell me practical stuff. Sometimes I think he thinks he did a better job of raising me than he did with his own kids.

Another participant sent her mentor Father's Day cards because she felt "it seemed an appropriate way to honor the kind of help that he was giving me." She described the type of support he offered her as, "personal, professional, emotional, and financial."

Experiencing Gender Issues

The women interviewed in this study experienced gender issues in their mentoring relationships in a variety of ways. For the women in the study whose primary mentor was a female, gender played a critical role in shaping the relationship. The women reported that for them, having a female mentor was a powerful role model for them. In addition to role modeling, the women in homogeneous mentoring relationships felt that it enhanced the friendship aspects of the relationship and provided a more comfortable zone in which to discuss issues of gender bias and discrimination. However, this study found that women in all of these mentoring relationships experienced a high level of friendship with their mentors. Indeed, for two of the participants in cross-gender mentoring relationships, the fact that their mentor was a male was viewed as an added benefit. One participant described her cross-gender mentoring relationship in this way:

> I don't think a woman could have done for me what [my mentor] did for me. I think [my mentor] opened up doors that a woman could not have. Because women were still coming into their own in the mid-70s . . . we didn't have any top administrators that were women. [My mentor] had access at a time that women didn't have.

Another participant, who was in a homogeneous mentoring relationship, described the importance of gender in her relationship:

> I've had lots of male friends and I've had male supervisors who have been very, very good to me and have done good things for me. But I think the fact that she was the same gender made it really easy for us to connect from early on. . . . And you know, you use those personal experiences to bond. And we did that by talking about kids, what we were cooking and that sort of thing. It gives you an extra piece . . . an avenue to pursue to be involved with each other in ways other than the formal relationship.

While one of the participants in a cross-gender mentoring relationship described a degree of "sexual static" in her relationship that they successfully worked through, none

of the women described any insurmountable cross-gender issues. As one woman recalled,

> I'm sure some people might have talked but since our families got together I just didn't consider that an issue. I am not naïve enough to think some people weren't thinking it was something else—but I knew the truth.

Life-Skill Development

Mentors also assisted their protégés in skill development outside of the professional arena. By either serving as a role model for certain behaviors or by direct counsel, mentors helped to shape the participant's personal lives as well. One interviewee remembered

> He taught me basic stuff too—how to order wine, how to tell a bad wine from a good wine, what to order for dinner—just things I needed to know. And I was not embarrassed that he was teaching me these things. . . . He said, "When you go to the bank, don't always go to the drive-thru. Go inside so they get to know you . . . make it a point to introduce yourself to the president of the bank you're dealing with. So that when you need to go in and borrow money or get something you're not a stranger—they know you.

For another participant, her mentor served as a powerful role model of determination:

> She was very, very organized. She had lots of checklists and she was careful to appreciate people—send cards and notes, recognize people. And she was a good role model in the way she managed her life and her time and her determination. I watched her grow and develop and discussed it with her. And watching her determination was kind of an amazing thing to see. Because she really changed her life. And she was sort of a role model of determination about what you can accomplish. . . . I have never seen a more determined person.

Effects on Career Development

In the initial survey, women administrative leaders were asked to what extent they felt their mentors had impacted their careers and over three-fourths indicated that their mentor had strongly impacted their career development. The women administrative leaders interviewed for this study indicated their mentors played major roles in the

evolution of their careers. For the purposes of this study, career development was defined as both the lateral and upward progression in an individual's profession and the factors influencing this progression. Development specifically referred to an increase in personal and professional skills as well as an increase in job related responsibilities. In the following section, the career path and influencing factors for these protégés, their awareness that mentoring was occurring and when it occurred, and the influence of the mentor's organizational role will be presented.

Each administrative leader was asked how they became interested in community college administration. None of the women interviewed had planned a career in community college administration. Three of the participants had begun their careers as faculty members in community colleges. For the other three women, each began their careers in community college administration through a variety of transitional jobs in an institution of higher education. As one participant said, "you don't wake up one day in junior high school and decide that you want to become a community college vice president." For many of these women, it was their mentor who helped create a vision of an administrative career for them. One leader said, "I thought my end goal might be a dean and he definitely saw it as community college president. He really helped me see myself in that light." Overall, for each of these administrative leaders, their eventual career paths were defined and/or altered as a result of their mentoring relationship(s).

Awareness of Mentoring

At the beginning of their mentoring relationships, only one of the administrative leaders was aware that she was involved in a mentoring relationship. For this participant, although not part of any formal mentoring program, her mentor defined it as a mentoring relationship from the start. The majority of participants did not become aware that they

were involved in a mentoring relationship until some time later. As one participant recalled

> I just thought he was being kind and friendly. I don't know that I knew the term mentoring then at all. He sent me to a workshop—the National Leaders Program—and they started talking about mentoring. And I said, "That's what [my mentor] does for me, that's why he sent me here!

For a number of participants in this study, it was only upon reflection that they really were able to clearly see that they were being mentored. One participant indicated that she only became aware of her involvement in a mentoring relationship as a protégé when she became a mentor herself. She said, "When I started using some of her techniques and involving people that I saw as having potential. I saw people who I wanted to get the chance to have more leadership opportunity."

Career Development Functions of Mentor

The mentors for the participants in this study primarily assisted the career development of their protégés in the following four ways:

- Providing opportunities to demonstrate talent, competence, and potential to internal and external constituents (exposure and visibility).
- Providing feedback, sharing ideas, and suggesting strategies for professional skill development (coaching).
- Promoting individual for special projects, promotions, and jobs (sponsorship).
- Providing challenging tasks and work assignments (challenging assignments).

All of the administrative leaders interviewed for this study indicated that their mentor had effected their career development by providing feedback, sharing ideas, and suggesting strategies for professional development. For many of the participants, this coaching included a recommendation to pursue the doctoral degree. One woman's mentor told her, "if you are going to stay in community college education, you should go

back and get the terminal degree . . . you ought to have the credentials so that when opportunities present themselves it won't be a barrier." For another participant, her mentor advised her to move out of one sector of community college education because he thought it would limit her future advancement. For others the coaching came in the form of gentle feedback. She said

> He said, "I'm telling you this because I really like you, but the next time you do this, you might think about . . ." So that was very valuable to be told in a gentle kind of way—and you knew what they were telling you.

Almost all of the administrative leaders interviewed spoke of a variety of ways that their mentor had increased their exposure and visibility within their organizations or externally. One participant observed

> He said, "For the next three months, I want you to follow me to every community group I go to." And everywhere I went he would sit me down at a Chamber meeting and announce, "I want everyone to meet my new dean of instruction." And this happened 30-50 times so in a month everyone in [my district] knew me where it would have taken me 3 years!

Another leader described how her mentor, who was the community college president, exposed her to every aspect of the college, the community, and nationally. She said

> He just put me out there. [My mentor] opened avenues and doors for me that never would have been open to me. It would have been so much harder and maybe not at all. But he really made it possible.

Most of the administrative leaders described situations where their mentors urged them to look outside the boundaries of their jobs and get involved in larger college-wide projects and accept leadership assignments. One participant credited her mentor for providing leadership opportunities where she had the "ability to impact peers and faculty beyond my division and in the community."

Sponsorship was another aspect of the mentoring relationship for most of the interview participants. Half of the participants recalled that their mentor recommended

them for promotions even as the mentor was leaving the institution. One woman describes her mentor's influence in this way:

> She was very direct with the president and vice president about who she thought should be one of the next leaders in the group. So she promoted me to higher levels. When she left the institution, she recommended me for her job.

For another participant, her mentor's sponsorship of her to a prestigious graduate program in community college leadership was pivotal in her career development. She said,

> When she was able to get the president to let both she and I go to [university] under professional development, she actually took me there and took me around. . . . She took me to meet [the director] to classes, and to the library. And that is when I said, "This is the woman that I will always turn to." I think that was the turning point. . . . It clinched it in terms of my own "what I want to do when I grow up."

Providing challenging work assignments were features of almost all the mentoring relationships for these administrative leaders. These assignments included serving on Title III writing teams, directing college self-studies, leading roles on special initiatives, and public speaking engagements. For some, these speaking engagements proved to be among the most important challenging assignments of their professional lives. As one leader recalled,

> My first public speaking engagement was at a graduation where he had me preside. I said, "I can't do this" and he said, "Oh, yes you can." But you know, he insisted that I do this and I'm very comfortable in front of a crowd and a mike now. . . . He knew that was one of the skills that I would need to be successful.

Organizational Role of Mentor

The organizational role of the mentor was an important aspect of the successful mentoring relationships. In all but one case, the mentor for these administrative leaders was an individual with power and/or connections to the president within the organization. For one participant, while her mentor was not someone connected with her organization,

he was a former community college president whose experience and understanding of both higher education and politics were "invaluable." One of the interviewees illustrated the importance of her mentor's role in her organization in the following way:

> He was president so I think I was very fortunate. Very, very fortunate. I don't think it would have been the same had it been a dean or even a vice president. This is someone who has the last word.

For the women whose mentors were within the organization but not the president of the college, their mentors had connections to the president that enhanced the mentor's ability to provide exposure and visibility for the protégé. As one participant shared,

> Because of her role in institutional advancement she was able to get me involved. . . . She was really creating a whole new area for the college. Because of her relationship with the president, that benefited me also. I looked at the president as a mentor but one I had less contact with.

Benefits and Limitations

The participants were asked to describe the benefits and limitations of their mentoring relationships as protégés and the responses were overwhelmingly positive. Benefits were defined as aspects of the relationship that enhanced or promoted their well-being or afforded them an advantage. Limitations were defined as aspects of the relationship that were restricting, constraining, or a shortcoming. This section will discuss both the benefits and limitations of their experience as protégés.

Benefits

The administrative leaders in this study cited many ways they feel they benefited from their relationship with their mentor. These descriptions reveal that the mentors for these participants provided both professional and psychological benefits. A primary psychological benefit described by almost all of the interviewees was the increased

confidence and self-esteem they felt as a result of their mentoring relationship. One administrative leader revealed

> I was a very shy person, which I started to get over once I became a teacher, but as a child I had had very low self-esteem. . . . And so to have the president of the college take an interest in you . . . I felt very special. It was very gratifying for my self-esteem and self-concept. It gave me the courage to make the tougher decisions.

Another participant described how she benefited from her mentoring relationship in a similar way:

> I wasn't a very confident person. My parents divorced when I was ten and, you know, that did something to my self-esteem. He made me feel like I could be successful—really built my self-confidence, my self-esteem, and my feeling that I could do whatever it is I wanted to do.

The women administrative leaders also benefited from the readily accessible advice and counsel provided by their mentors. One participant said, "I was able to learn from her and share with her my doubts and get good advice quickly and not make as many mistakes and feel confident in the job faster." The participants all felt that their mentors were always available to them. As one woman stated, "She always had time for me when I needed her. If I really needed to talk, I could go in there."

The participants in this study also cited a number of ways in which they benefited professionally from their mentoring relationships. Several participants described the ways in which their mentors had helped them understand the larger structure and politics of their organization. One interviewee recalled

> It meant I had someone to bounce things off of. Big things—career decisions, questions about the structure and what works and what doesn't. I had someone to discuss those things with. Someone whose opinion I respected who had the ability to step back and see the big picture.

Based on their descriptions, almost all of the women leaders experienced benefits that ultimately shaped their professional lives. Some of the participants felt one of the

great benefits of their mentoring relationship was that they felt they had a partner in their career. A common theme was illustrated by the experience of this administrative leader when she reflected

> It meant the world to me. I give [my mentor] credit for whatever success I have achieved and whatever I have become. I owe it all to him. I truly credit him with that. I had good bones and a good background but he kind of did the finishing touches and molded me. I give him credit for whatever success I enjoy today. I think it's important for a successful career. I think it's important for a successful life.

Limitations

While all of the women administrative leaders felt their mentoring relationships were enormously beneficial to them both personally and professionally, the majority of participants were aware of a few limitations associated with these relationships. The limitations experienced are characterized as both psychological and professional. For several participants, their mentor also served as a role model of negative behavior. For example, on administrative leader noted, "There were things that I observed that I would not do. That just by watching her I thought it wasn't appropriate to me or I didn't like the effect I could see it had on people." Another participant said

> Some things that he might have told me to do that I could not do. One of his flaws was that he had such an ego that he couldn't acknowledge to himself that maybe one-third of the employees didn't like his style. And I would know, because I would be out there.

One administrative leader described one of the limitations of her mentoring relationship was the need to guard against being too closely aligned with one individual in the organization. She described her experience in the following way:

> The downside is you've got to be careful not to look like the golden child. You've got to be careful not to be too closely associated with the things she's not perfect in and that maybe you don't agree with. . . . There were a couple of administrators that she didn't get along with and they would try to block her and I knew to make sure they saw me as different from her. That was really important.

Overall, the administrative leaders interviewed in this study described experiences that provided far more benefits than limitations. Even the administrative leaders who described limitations felt they learned from the experience and therefore were beneficial to them. Without exception, the participants felt that their mentoring relationships with their mentors were beneficial and proved very effective in their professional development.

Extent of Mentoring as Mentors

In the initial survey, 49 (94.2%) of the respondents reported that they had experienced one or more mentoring relationships where they served or are serving in the role of the mentor. All but one of the 49 respondents reported that their protégé was an individual whose role in the organization was one or more levels lower than their own. For the six interview subjects, half of the protégés held positions in the organization one level lower than the mentor and half of the protégés held positions more than one level lower in the organization.

Protégé Ethnicity and Gender

Males were the primary protégés for four of the six administrative leaders interviewed. Four of the protégés were Caucasian, one was African-American, and one was Hispanic. For the four Caucasian women in the final sample, two had Caucasian male protégés, one had an African-American female protégé, and one had an Hispanic male protégé. The African-American participant's primary protégé was a Caucasian male, and the Native American subject's primary protégé was a Caucasian female. In summary, the interview subjects experienced more cross-gender and diversified mentoring relationships as mentors than reported in the results of the initial survey.

Protégé Selection

With only one exception, each of the interviewees indicated that their mentoring relationships with their protégés had begun informally with members within their own organizations. For one participant, the mentoring relationship was part of a formal mentoring program at her institution. In the majority of these mentoring relationships, the administrative leader served in a supervisory role for the protégé, although not necessarily as a direct report.

The administrative leaders described a variety of ways in which they became involved in the mentoring relationship with their protégé. For half of the participants, it was the protégé who initiated the relationship. One administrator described how she initiated her mentoring relationship with her protégé in the following way:

> This was very much an intentional decision to mentor her. I knew after working with her for a couple of months that she was special. That she is going to be able to do good things. I mean there are some people that I wouldn't want to mentor. I don't think it would be good for them and it wouldn't be good for me.

Another administrative leader saw something of herself in her protégé that was compelling and recalled

> We started talking and I saw so much of myself at that age. I said, "Perhaps I can help her as she moves through this journey in her graduate program as well as this journey in life. She's a very bright young woman. She needs what I needed at that age—a little polishing. She'll get there.

Half of the administrative leader's mentoring relationships developed as a result of the protégé's initiation. For some this was a more formal process than for others. One participant said, "The working relationship was very easy and comfortable and we discussed the possibility of me serving as her mentor. She asked me directly and it evolved from there." Another participant's protégé came to her and said, "I need someone to mentor me." The formal mentoring program at one administrative leader's

college was structured in such a way so that potential protégés in a leadership program identify someone from a pool of potential mentors. This administrative leader shared her concerns about the artificiality of the formal program and said she wondered if the protégés strategically selected mentors to maximize the potential of future promotions for themselves.

In the initial survey, over 85% of the respondents reported that the mentoring relationships with their protégés had "just happened" or that they had initiated the relationships themselves. For the administrative leaders interviewed the relationships evolved or were initiated by the mentor in only one-third of the cases.

Other Protégés

All of the administrative leaders interviewed had been involved in other helping relationships. In all of these relationships, the participants primarily offered career-related assistance. As one participant related

> There are people that I have encouraged to get their doctorate and offered kind of an unfettered, "I'll recommend you for anything you want" because I know they are good people. We talk about what [the job] entails—all the ups and downs. Talk about all those career things, like do you need to change institutions to go higher up. All those things.

For most of these administrative leaders, while they offer career guidance and support to others, their mentoring relationships are considerably more developed.

Quality of the Mentoring Experience as Mentors

The two major themes that emerged from the participants regarding the meaning of their mentoring experiences as mentors were a strong sense of responsibility to mentor others and experiencing gender issues.

Responsibility to Mentor

All of the women interviewed in this study reported feeling that they had a personal and professional obligation and responsibility to mentor others. For most, this sense of responsibility and obligation grew out of the positive experiences that they had had with their own mentors. One administrative leader recalled how her own mentor had strongly encouraged her to help others when she was in a position to do so. The majority of these administrative leaders also articulated the benefits of mentoring for their colleges and for their profession. One leader said, "I would be doing my institution and higher education a disservice if I did not take this responsibility to help develop others and to prepare others for leadership positions to serve along side us or after us." Another participant observed the following about why she chooses to mentor others:

> I think you have to care about people in general and that part of your thing in life, part of what you want to do is to help other people. With no recognition and no appreciation and sometimes no success at it. But you have to care enough to try. And that becomes part of your make up and what you do. And you have to care about your profession and about education in general.

Erickson's (1963) seventh stage of adult psychosocial development, generativity, is evident in the experiences of the majority of the participants. Erickson refers to generativity as an adult's ability to look outside oneself and care for others and reflects an innate need to create a living legacy. In addition to parenting, mentoring can also characterize this developmental stage. Most of the administrative leaders in this study described the value of mentoring in terms of how it promotes this feeling of generativity. One interviewee described what her mentoring relationship means to her in the following way:

> I know she's going to do well. And that's going to benefit this college and that's going to benefit her. Just having her grow and accomplish. I mean I would feel like I accomplished something if, within four or five years she was a dean. I

> wouldn't take credit for it but I'd feel that I got her thinking along those lines and gave her opportunities—like people did for me.

Still another participant said

> There is great satisfaction in seeing [my protégé] succeed. And she will be successful. I look at her like a daughter—makes me feel young. Makes me want to give her what [my mentor] gave me. I feel an obligation to give that back.

And finally, one participant summed serving as a mentor as focusing on the future and working to make it better. She revealed the hope that her serving as a mentor will help create a better educational environment for students and said, "If I can influence someone to do better at that, then I've left a legacy in some little way."

Experiencing Gender Issues

Most of the participants expressed a special interest in mentoring other women although only one half of the women were involved in mentoring relationships with women. For those interviewed who were currently mentoring other women, the theme of a special responsibility to guide and assist other women was common. As one interviewee said, "I feel it is our responsibility as professionals to mentor other women. I am passionate about this. I think too often women compete rather than support each other in the workplace." Another administrative leader shared the following:

> I think there is a commitment within me to bring other women along the way I was brought along. I can't see myself mentoring a white male. Can't see it. I mean I could do it. But I want to take somebody's who is female, perhaps a person of color, and say, "You know, we can all do this and you're going to do great!"

All of the participants, regardless of the gender of the protégé in their primary mentoring relationships, expressed the idea that the quality of the friendship or the benefits of role modeling in these relationships might be enhanced if their protégés were female. One administrator illustrated their perspective well when she said,

> The fact that [my protégé] she is a woman really enhances the friendship aspect of our relationship. And it probably helps her to see someone of her own gender make it through the system. It allows her to see the possibilities.

For those participants whose protégés were male, the experiences were varied. For one interviewee, she felt that she was able to assist her male protégé by providing him with another perspective. She said: "I'm trying to teach him to be more open with facts and budgets. I give him another way of looking at things."

Possible gender and cultural biases were experienced for some of the participants involved with more diversified mentoring relationships. One participant felt her Hispanic male protégé might be struggling with some cultural bias because she was a woman. For another participant, the mentoring relationship became extremely dysfunctional to the point of hostility on the part of the protégé. She said, "I'm not saying it was racist or sexist, but I think it was a little of both."

Effects on Career Development

In the initial survey, women administrative leaders were asked to what extent they felt they had impacted the professional and career development of their protégés. Twenty-four (48.9%) of the leaders indicated that they had strongly impacted the careers of their protégés and 46.9% indicated that they impacted their protégé's career somewhat. In addition, the majority (87.8%) of the survey respondents indicated that serving as a mentor had positively impacted their own career development, while 12.2% indicated that serving as a mentor had had both positive and negative effects. Primarily, the administrative leaders experienced positive outcomes to their professional development rather than career development. Many of the participants cited examples of how they learn from their protégés and that enhances their own professional development. One interviewee involved in a formal mentoring program as a mentor described the positive impact on her own professional development in the following way:

> I go [to developmental activities] to be supportive of the program and spend some time with the person I'm mentoring and I get a bonus. I love to learn. You can't hear developmental kinds of things too much and I frequently don't take the time. . . . I have also volunteered to do some presentations which hones my teaching and presentation skills.

Another participant described a moment of reflected glory when her protégé did well with an important presentation. She recalled, "I felt like I did that and they both recognized it."

Career Development Functions Provided

The administrative leaders interviewed in this study primarily assisted the career development of their protégés in the following two ways:

- Providing opportunities to demonstrate talent, competence, and potential to internal and external constituents (exposure and visibility).
- Providing feedback, sharing ideas, and suggesting strategies for professional skill development (coaching).

All of the administrative leaders interviewed described assisting their protégés by providing feedback, sharing ideas, and suggesting strategies for professional development. For many of the participants, this coaching took the form of discussing leadership styles, conflict resolution, supervisory skills, career strategies, and recommendations to pursue doctorate degrees. One participant spends a great deal of her time with her protégé "discussing career moves and how she can position herself for the next move." Still another related how she is helping her protégé create a career vision and said

> I keep asking him what it is he wants to do professionally, what he aspires to. And he told me some of the things and I told him to think of some larger things . . . look at himself in a larger role. Because he is capable of more than he said he wanted to do. I think sometimes people just need to be told; they need to hear from someone that you shouldn't limit yourself . . . that you can do bigger and better things. That's what [my mentor] did for me.

Many of the participants provided opportunities for their protégés to demonstrate their talent, competence, and potential. For most of these administrative leaders this assistance came in the form of providing leadership development opportunities both internally and externally. One administrator's response was reflective of the experience for most when she said, "I bring her opportunities."

Benefits and Limitations

The participants were asked to describe the benefits and limitations of serving as a mentor in their mentoring relationships. While the participants felt these relationships were beneficial they also shared a number of perceived limitations. As stated earlier, benefits were defined as aspects of the relationship that enhanced or promoted their well-being and limitations were defined as aspects of the relationship that were constraining or a shortcoming. This section will discuss both the benefits and limitations of the participant's mentoring experiences as mentors.

Benefits

The administrative leaders in this study cited a number of ways they feel they benefit from their relationship with their protégé. Their descriptions reveal that the benefits are more psychological than professional. A primary psychological benefit described by each of the interviewees was the enormous personal reward and satisfaction of being able to give back some of the guidance and assistance help given to them. Most of the participants described feeling a sense of great pride in contributing to the success of others in their profession. One participant shared the following about her mentoring experience as a mentor:

> It makes me happy that I can complete the circle. . . . It is so beneficial to have someone take an interest in your career. I think it requires you to think of

> yourself differently. It changes the way you view yourself. It provides a wonderful opportunity to do some self-examination and reflection.

Another interviewee said, "It's personally satisfying. I need to find someone else now [that we are peers] because it's fun. I feel a little like I have an empty nest."

Limitations

Most of the administrative leaders interviewed for this study experienced both professional and psychological limitations in their mentoring relationships with their protégés. Several participants described the professional risk involved in choosing a protégé. One participant, whose protégé initiated the relationship, revealed the following:

> My counterpart in [another division] thought he was sexist…and another colleague thought he was a bit lazy and never got anything in and didn't want to follow the rules. It was a problem and I told him. . . . There was some risk to that and whether or not he would be able to overcome some of those things. And he's done a really good job. I weighed the risk and I think that's why it took us nearly a year to get very far. I was a little cautious.

Another participant who is involved in a formal mentoring program at her institution shared her concerns about the motivations of the protégés when choosing the mentors. This leader felt that the protégés might choose their mentor based on, "who would be the best person to be my mentor that might help me later." More than one participant cautioned that one needed to really know the person when they develop a mentoring relationship.

None of the participants reported experiencing personal friendships with their protégés outside of the professional work environment. For all but one of the women, whose mentoring relationship ended poorly, the relationships were described as friendly with varying degrees of personal sharing. For most of the participants, limiting the friendship aspect of these mentoring relationships is a conscious choice. One interviewee

said, "I have the same issues [my mentor] had. I need to make sure that he's not the favored one among all the other people I work with."

Summary

This study was designed to examine the phenomenon of mentoring for Florida community college women leaders as both protégés and as mentors. The results are based on the responses to an initial mentoring questionnaire and on an analysis of the data collected in in-depth interviews conducted with a purposeful sample of six community college administrative leaders regarding their mentoring experiences. This chapter presented the findings based on this research and answered the six research questions posed in the study:

- To what extent (frequency, duration, and number of mentors) have women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges been mentored? Who has mentored them (gender, ethnicity, and organizational role) and what does the mentoring experience mean for them as a protégé?
- How has their mentoring experience as protégé effected the career development of women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges?
- What are the benefits and limitations of the mentoring relationship as a protégé?
- To what extent (frequency, duration and number of protégés) are women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges mentoring others? Who are they mentoring (gender, ethnicity, and organizational role) and what does the mentoring experience mean for them as the mentor?
- How has their mentoring experience as a mentor effected the career development of women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges?
- What are the benefits and limitations of the mentoring relationship as a mentor?

Overall, this study found that mentoring relationships were an important factor in the career, professional, and personal development of women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges. As a result of these positive developmental relationships, women community college leaders feel a special obligation and responsibility to mentor

others and are passing on their knowledge and experience to other women and men in the Florida community college leadership pipeline.

CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The summary, conclusions, and recommendations are presented in this chapter in three sections. In the first section, a summary of the study, including the purpose of the study, methodology employed, and a review of the findings are presented. In the second section, the conclusions based on the study findings and implications for practice are discussed, and the recommendations for further research are presented in the final section.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to examine the experience of the mentoring relationship for women administrative leaders serving in Florida's community colleges. In particular, the focus of the study was to examine the phenomenon of mentoring for the women leaders as both mentors and protégés.

The benefits of mentoring relationships for career and professional development, especially for men, have been well-documented in the literature (Kram, 1985; Levinson et al., 1978; Missirian, 1982). The literature also suggests that mentoring may be an especially important career development strategy for women (Granger, 1993; Kaplan et al., 1984; Moore, 1983). It was the intent of this study to understand the nature of the mentoring experience for women administrative leaders serving in Florida's community colleges and to extend the knowledge and description of these mentoring relationships.

Utilizing a qualitative methodology, this investigation examined the extent of the mentoring experience as mentors and as protégés, the effect of these relationships on career development, and both the benefits and limitations of the mentoring relationships. The following questions guided the study:

- To what extent (frequency, duration, and number of mentors) have women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges been mentored? Who has mentored them (gender, ethnicity, and organizational role) and what does the mentoring experience mean for them as a protégé?
- How has their mentoring experience as protégé effected the career development of women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges?
- What are the benefits and limitations of the mentoring relationship as a protégé?
- To what extent (frequency, duration and number of protégés) are women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges mentoring others? Who are they mentoring (gender, ethnicity, and organizational role) and what does the mentoring experience mean for them as the mentor?
- How has their mentoring experience as a mentor effected the career development of women administrative leaders in Florida's public community colleges?
- What are the benefits and limitations of the mentoring relationship as a mentor?

Methodology

The study's research design included three phases. In the first phase, a closed-ended self-administered questionnaire was mailed to the 77 women administrative leaders coded 01 Executive as reported in the Florida Division of Community Colleges Annual Personnel Report. The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine which women community college administrative leaders were mentored and to determine their perceptions of the mentoring relationship and its impact on their career development.

In the second phase of the study, a purposeful sample was chosen from the survey respondents who indicated a willingness to participate in the interview phase and who had experienced mentoring relationships both as a mentor and as a protégé. Sample

selection continued to the point of redundancy of the informational considerations in relation to institutional size, respondent's position, age, and ethnicity. Therefore, participants for this study were selected to ensure inclusion of the important contextual variations in the population and the size of the final sample was determined by the informational considerations.

In the third phase of the study, in-depth, tape-recorded standardized open-ended personal interviews were conducted with the six selected subjects in the final sample. The standardized open-ended interviews were conducted in person with the individuals selected for the final sample. At the beginning of each interview, an oral review of the purpose of the interview and the definition of a mentoring relationship as used in the study was provided to the participants. During the interview, the researcher paraphrased, restated, and summarized each subject's responses to the questions to ensure clarity and understanding.

The tape-recorded interviews were then transcribed, coded, and categorized for analysis by the researcher. While analyzing the interview data, the researcher conformed with the constructs of qualitative research and attempted to discover the emergent themes and patterns of the mentoring experience for the subjects.

Review of the Findings

The findings of this study were based on the analysis of the responses from the initial questionnaire and in-depth interviews that related to the six major research questions posed. A review of those findings is presented in this part.

Extent of Mentoring Experience as Protégés

The majority of women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges have experienced one or more mentoring relationships as protégés. All were informal

relationships and not part of a formal mentoring program. The primary mentor for these leaders was in most cases an individual serving in a higher position in the organization than the protégé. There was an average age difference of 11.4 years between the mentors and protégés when the mentoring relationship developed. On average, the leaders were 34 years old at the beginning of their mentoring relationships. Overall, the majority of individuals who served as mentors for the community college women leaders were older Caucasian males in positions of higher organizational rank.

This study found that mentoring relationships were experienced as primary or supplemental. The primary relationships were characterized as providing both the psychosocial and career development functions to the protégé while the supplemental relationships provided mostly career related functions.

The major themes that emerged from the protégé's descriptions of their mentoring experiences were that a mentoring relationship meant that they had assistance and guidance in the form of interpersonal support, experiencing gender issues, and life skill development.

Effect of Mentoring on Career Development as Protégés

Having a mentor was a critical factor in the career development of the administrative leaders. For each of the administrative leaders interviewed, their eventual career paths were defined and/or altered as a result of their mentoring relationships. The primary career development functions provided included: exposure and visibility, coaching, sponsorship, and challenging assignments. In addition, the organizational role of the mentor was an important aspect of the effective mentoring relationship in terms of the effect on the career development of the protégé.

Benefits and Limitations as Protégés

The administrative leaders as protégés experienced both professional and psychological benefits as a result of their mentoring relationships. The primary benefits were the increased self-esteem and confidence experienced as a result of these mentoring relationships and the benefit of having a partner in their career.

Limitations were few but were also experienced as psychological and professional. Negative role-modeling was the primary limitation in these relationships but also considered beneficial in what was learned as a result.

Extent of Mentoring Experience as Mentors

The majority of women administrative leaders are serving as a mentor to one or more protégés who serve in lower organizational positions. When these mentoring relationships developed, the leaders were younger than their mentors with an average age of 43.8 years. The protégé average age was 34, the same age as when they were the protégés, but the age difference was lower by 2.5 years. Overall, the majority of leaders were involved in mentoring relationships with Caucasian female protégés resulting in less cross-gender mentoring than reported in their mentoring relationships as protégés.

The findings indicate that women administrative leaders are serving as both primary and supplemental mentors to protégés. The assistance they provide in the supplemental mentoring relationships is primarily career related.

The major themes that emerged from the leaders descriptions of their mentoring experiences as mentors a strong sense of responsibility to mentor others and experiencing gender issues.

Effect of Mentoring on Career Development as Mentors

The administrative leaders experienced professional development rather than career development in their mentoring relationships as mentors. As mentors, the leaders

render assistance and guidance to their protégés by providing exposure and visibility and coaching.

Benefits and Limitations as Mentors

Mentoring relationships as mentors were experienced by the administrative leaders as beneficial but limited. The primary benefit to the mentors is largely psychological as the administrative leaders experienced enormous personal reward and satisfaction as a result of mentoring. Limitations were experienced as both professional and psychological. The women administrative leaders have not developed close personal relationships with their protégés.

Conclusions and Discussion

The findings presented in Chapter 4 were based on the analysis of the responses that related to the six major research questions considered in this study. The purpose of this phenomenological research study was to understand the nature of the mentoring experience for women administrative leaders serving in Florida's community colleges. The following conclusions regarding the essence of the mentoring experience for women community college leaders in Florida are based on these findings and are presented in this section.

First, it can be concluded from the findings of this study that mentoring was a critical factor in the career development of women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges. None of the women interviewed for this study had goals or had planned a career in community college administration. As Levinson et al. (1978) assert, helping to instill and realize the dream is one of the most important developmental functions of a mentor. For these leaders, it was their mentor who played a key role in creating a vision of an administrative career for them. Most of the women indicated that

they owed reaching their executive positions and career success all or in part to their mentors. Some comments illustrate this: "I give him credit for whatever success I enjoy today." "In retrospect, if she hadn't given me that kind of support . . . I might have gone back to teaching." "He helped me see that I had skills, potential, and ability to make a bigger contribution and to have a career." "Without [my mentor], I wouldn't be sitting here." The mentors for these women assisted by coaching them to pursue advance degrees, providing opportunities for them to develop new skills and demonstrate their talents and abilities, and sharing knowledge about the structure and politics of their organization and profession. Thus, by creating a career vision and partnering in the fulfillment of that vision, it can be concluded that the impact of mentoring on the career development for this group of women community college leaders appears to be as critical as the literature suggests.

The second conclusion that can be drawn from the findings is that each of these administrative leaders had more than one mentor assist them in their professional development indicating that mentors can be either primary or supplemental. While their primary mentors provided both essential career development and psychosocial functions of mentoring to these leaders, their supplemental mentors primarily provided career development assistance. Supplemental mentors can provide assistance at any point in a career and can be experienced prior to, subsequent to, or simultaneously with the primary mentoring relationship. Supplemental mentors provide an important, often different perspective, to the leader. Therefore, it can be concluded that effective mentors can be primary or supplemental.

The third conclusion verified by this study is that of all the characteristics of the mentor, organizational role appears to be the most important factor in the career

development of these leaders. The mentors for the women in this study, regardless of gender, each had professional or organizational power, knowledge, and influence that they used to influence their protégé's career and professional development. This finding is consistent with the literature on women and mentoring regarding the importance of the organizational position and power of the mentor to the career development outcomes for the protégé. (Darby, 1996; Fleming, 1991; Missirian, 1982).

The fourth conclusion obtained is that rendering interpersonal support may be a key factor in an effective mentoring relationship. All of the administrative leaders indicated that they had experienced an increase in their self-confidence and self-esteem as a result of their mentor's belief, support, encouragement, and friendship. Trust and honesty were vital characteristics of the mentoring relationships studied in this research. Equally important was that the mentor was perceived to always be available and accessible to the protégé.

In addition, while the gender of the mentor did not appear to be a factor in the career development of these administrative leaders, it did appear to affect the psychosocial aspects of the relationship for these women. For the leaders in homogeneous mentoring relationships, gender was perceived to enhance the role modeling and friendship aspects of the relationship. Most often, the role of the supplemental mentor was to provide a different gender perspective on career development or to provide more psychosocial functions to the protégé. The administrative leaders in this study also reported experiencing more gender issues with their male protégés, both positive and negative, and have yet to develop close personal relationships with their protégés similar to what they themselves experienced with their mentors.

All of these factors support the conclusion that the more fully developed the relationship is in terms of psychosocial functions provided by the mentor, the more effective the relationship is to the protégé for personal and professional development.

The fifth conclusion to be discussed is that the administrative leaders who experienced mentoring relationships feel a personal and professional responsibility to mentor others, particularly women and other minorities. All of the leaders are experiencing mentoring relationships with protégés that are both primary and supplemental and many, despite their stated commitment to mentor other women, are involved in cross-gender mentoring relationships. The personal knowledge of the benefits of mentoring relationships to them individually, to their organization and to their profession gained as a result of their own experience, compels them to in turn give back this gift of personal and professional development to others.

The final conclusion reached from this research is that formal mentoring programs, lacking in the natural selection that enhances interpersonal support, are less effective than more informal mentoring.

The benefits of mentoring for career development have been well established in the research and promoted in professional and popular media as an answer to career development problems and issues. Institutions and organizations have naturally attempted to formalize this beneficial career development strategy for incorporating newcomers to the organization, and to identify and prepare future leadership. Based on the findings of this research, it may be concluded that interpersonal chemistry is a critical component of the effective mentoring relationship and formal programs that attempt to engineer relationships will be less effective in providing the full range of both career and psychosocial mentoring functions.

Overall, this study of women leaders in Florida's community colleges confirmed many of the findings and conclusions of Darby's (1996) national study that examined the mentoring experiences of women community college administrative leaders in role as protégé. This study expanded that research to determine the extent to which women are experiencing the mentoring phenomenon as mentors. In summary, mentoring relationships, both primary and supplemental, were found to be a critical factor in the career and professional development of women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges. The mentor's organizational role was the most important mentor characteristic effecting the career development of the women leaders. One of the most distinguishing features of the effective mentoring relationship for the leaders was the degree of interpersonal support provided by the mentor. While gender of their mentor did not appear to have an effect on the career development of these leaders, gender may play a role in both their mentoring relationships as protégés and mentors in the degree of interpersonal support and psychosocial functions provided and received. Finally, it was concluded that formal mentoring programs might be less than effective in providing the wide range of career development and psychosocial functions, which were found to be essential to successful mentoring relationships.

Implications

Florida's community colleges, like community colleges across the nation, are facing the challenges of an impending leadership void over the next ten years created by the projected retirements of presidents and others in the leadership pipeline. An additional challenge for community colleges in Florida is how to address the disparities in leadership for women and minorities. Florida trails the nation in the percentage of women serving as community college presidents. Nationally, 28% of the community

college presidents are women compared to only 11% in Florida. Therefore, Florida has a unique opportunity to simultaneously address this disparity in leadership while addressing the leadership vacuum.

Many studies confirm the value of mentoring for those, especially women, wishing to develop or advance a career. It was expected that this study would contribute to the existing body of knowledge about the mentoring experiences for women in community college leadership and that that knowledge would be instructive in designing formal mentoring programs and enhance leadership development strategies. Clearly, mentoring relationships are a critical element in building careers that include benefits that extend to the organization and to the profession.

One of the conclusions of this study was that formal mentoring programs may be an ineffective strategy for career and leadership development. A far more effective strategy for community colleges to utilize may be to critically examine the culture of the organization and to remove any barriers in the form of policies, procedures, or beliefs that limit the advancement of women and minorities to leadership positions.

Once this critical examination has been completed and barriers have been removed, community colleges can then promote the development of mentoring relationships by creating a culture that understands and values these relationships. Professional development programs that make clear the benefits of mentoring relationships to the mentors, to the protégés, to the institution, and to the profession should be made available to faculty, staff, and administrators. Career planning should be made an important component of professional development training.

Finally, rather than a formal mentoring program, the concept of mentoring should be formally endorsed and encouraged by the administration of the college, modeled by

the leaders, and incorporated as part of the institutional performance review and reward system. In this way, the culture and climate will be set to facilitate the development of connections that, unlike in orchestrated relationships, will allow for the widest range of career development and psychosocial functions.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study of the mentoring experiences of women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges suggest that a number of recommendations can be made for research. Recommendations for further study on the mentoring phenomenon and the role of mentoring in career development are as follows:

- A study examining the extent and role of mentoring in the career development of men and women in the community college leadership pipeline in Florida should be conducted and the results for each group compared.
- Additional research should be conducted on those in a broader category of executive, administrative, and managerial staff in Florida's community colleges.
- An examination of formal mentoring programs should be conducted to determine their effectiveness as compared to informal mentoring.
- Further research on men and women in community colleges who have not experienced mentoring may reveal new information about the role of mentoring in career development.
- A study that examines and compares different mentoring dyads should be conducted to learn more about the role of gender in mentoring relationships.
- More research is needed regarding the interpersonal aspects of mentoring relationships. The importance of the issues of trust, confidentiality, availability, connection, and friendship should be examined. In particular, how gender composition effects relationship outcomes could be investigated.
- A research study should be conducted that examines dysfunctional mentoring relationships.
- Additional research is needed which examines the same mentoring relationship from the perspective of the mentor and the protégé.

- Additional research studies are needed to learn more about the community college career paths of men and women. Since the women in this study did not have a career plan, it would be valuable to learn the role of a plan in the ultimate career paths of men and women.

- More research is needed to learn why Florida trails the nation in its percentage of female community college presidents. A study that examines recent presidential searches, utilizing qualitative methods and techniques such as interviews, case study, and resume analysis could be utilized.

- Finally, studies which investigate community colleges, universities, public schools, or corporations that have created cultures supportive of mentoring relationships, would be insightful. Comparisons of these organizations could be made with organizations that have formal mentoring programs or do not formally address mentoring in any way.

APPENDIX A
INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

January 10, 2003

Dear «Title» «Last_Name»:

My name is Rayanne Giddis and I am a doctoral candidate in Higher Education Administration at the University of Florida. The focus of my dissertation is to examine the mentoring experiences of women in administrative leadership in Florida's community colleges. The purpose of this research is to (a) provide a profile of women in community college leadership; (b) describe the extent of mentoring experiences for these women as both protégés and mentors; (c) determine the significance of mentoring in the career development of these women; and (d) describe both the benefits and limitations of mentoring relationships.

I am sending the enclosed questionnaire to all women presently serving in executive administrative leadership positions in Florida's community colleges. The results from this questionnaire will identify those women in Florida community college leadership positions who have experienced mentoring relationships both as mentors and protégés. Some of these women will be asked to participate in an open-ended, tape-recorded personal interview conducted by the researcher at a convenient time and place for the participant. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and is vitally important in developing the most accurate description of the mentoring experience for women in community college leadership. Participants selected for personal interviews will receive an official copy of the research findings.

Confidentiality is critically important in research. Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. Your questionnaire has been assigned a code number to facilitate follow-up communications only. The list connecting your name to this number will be kept securely in a locked file by the researcher and documents will be shredded upon the completion of the study. Only the researcher will have access to any audio recordings and interview transcripts, and these will also be destroyed upon completion of the study. Results will be reported in the aggregate and at no time will questionnaires or responses be identified by respondent's name. There are no known risks or direct benefits associated with your participation in this study. You will not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer. You may withdraw and discontinue your participation at any time without penalty.

The enclosed Mentoring Questionnaire should take no more than 15 minutes to complete. Upon completion, please return the questionnaire and a signed copy of this letter in the

self-addressed, stamped envelope provided. A second copy of this letter is provided for your records. If you agree to be interviewed and are selected for participation, I will contact you by telephone to schedule a one-hour personal interview at your convenience.

If you have any questions about your participation in this study, please call me at (352) 493-9533 (W) or (352) 375-8622 (H) or e-mail: giddisr@cf.edu (W) or rgsapp@att.net (H). You may also contact my committee chair, Dr. Dale Campbell at (352) 392-2391 ext. 281or e-mail: dfc@coe.ufl.edu if you have any questions about this study. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant may be directed to the UFIRB office, University of Florida, Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611 or (352) 392-0433.

I appreciate your time and cooperation and look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire. Your participation will help determine the significance of mentoring in the professional development of women in administrative leadership in Florida's community colleges. Please give me a call at (352) 493-9533 or (352) 375-8622 if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Rayanne Giddis
Doctoral Student, University of Florida
Director, Levy County Center
Central Florida Community College

I have thoroughly read the informed consent letter and voluntarily agree to participate in this dissertation research.

_____ _____

Research Participant Date

APPENDIX B
MENTORING QUESTIONNAIRE

Please share with me as much of the following information as possible. This information will assist me in determining the extent of mentoring that has occurred with women community college leaders in Florida. Thank you for your participation.

DIRECTIONS: Please provide the information or check the spaces as appropriate.

1. What is your current position:_____

2. Number of years in present position? _____

   in community college administration? _____

   in education? _____

3. What position did you hold immediately prior to your current position?

   _____

4. Age _____ Ethnicity _____

5. How would you define your institution?

   _____ Large, multi-campus institution (15,000 credit students or more)

   _____ Medium, single or multi-campus institution (6,000 – 15,000 credit students)

   _____ Small, single or multi-campus institution (fewer than 6,000 credit students)

6. a) Have you been guided by a more experienced individual (e.g., a mentor) who aided with your professional and career development beyond normal supervisory guidance? _____ Yes ____ No

   b) Have you provided guidance to a less experienced individual (e.g., a protégé) in an effort to aid this individual's professional and career development beyond normal supervisor guidance? _____Yes _____ No

If **No** to **both** questions in number 6, thank you for your cooperation. Please return the questionnaire and signed informed consent letter in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided.

If **Yes** to **either** question in number 6, please continue with questionnaire:

- **If you answered YES to both questions 6(a) and 6(b), please complete the remainder of this questionnaire.**
- **If you answered NO to question 6(a), please proceed directly to question 15.**
- **If you answered NO to question 6(b), please complete questions 7-14 only.**

As a protégé, you may have been guided by more than one individual; however, for the purpose of these questions, please focus upon *one* person who was your *first* mentor or the one who was the *most* influential.

7. What was the organizational rank of this individual compared to yours?

   _____Higher _____ Same _____Lower

8. What was the gender of this individual? _____Male _____Female

9. What was the ethnicity of this individual? _____

10. What was your age and the age of this individual when the relationship began?
    _____ Your age ____ Age of individual

11. Who initiated this relationship? _____I did _____the individual
    _____it just happened _____formal mentoring program

12. How would you presently characterize this relationship? Check the appropriate description that most closely defines the relationship.

    _____The relationship is still forming, 6 months to 1 year old.

    _____The relationship is 2 to 5 years old. There is a deepening emotional bond and frequent interaction.

    _____The relationship has changed in the last 6 months to 2 years because one or both of us have received a promotion or taken a new position.

    _____The relationship has changed in the last 6 months to 2 years because the emotional aspects of the relationship are no longer satisfying.

    _____The relationship ended or we now view each other as peers. (Kram, 1988)

13. To what extent do you feel this individual impacted your career development?

_____Strongly _____Somewhat _____ Minimally _____Not at all

14. Check the appropriate ways this individual impacted your professional and career development. You may check more than one response:

_____ encouraged me to pursue an advanced degree

_____ challenged me to develop the skills and competencies for the next immediate step by assigning tasks and responsibilities to me beyond my organizational scope

_____ helped and encouraged me to understand the politics of our organization

_____ helped me to gain visibility in our organization

_____helped me to recognize personal failure patterns and how to overcome these

_____ nominated me for special recognition and awards within and outside the organization.

_____ provided emotional support and personal advice

As a <u>mentor</u>, you may have guided more than one individual; however, for the purpose of this questionnaire focus upon the *one* person who was your *first* protégé or the one you feel you *most* influenced.

15. What was the organizational rank of this individual compared to yours?

_____ Same _____One level lower ____More than one level lower

16. What was the gender of this individual? ____Male _____Female

17. What was the ethnicity of this individual? _____

18. What was your age and the age of this individual when the relationship began?
_____Your age _____Age of individual

19. Who initiated this relationship? _____I did _____the individual
_____it just happened _____formal mentoring program

20. How would you presently characterize this relationship? Check the appropriate description that most closely defines the relationship.

_____The relationship is still forming, 6 months to 1 year old.

_____The relationship is 2 to 5 years old. There is a deepening emotional bond and frequent interaction.

_____The relationship has changed in the last 6 months to 2 years because one or both of us have received a promotion or taken a new position.

_____The relationship has changed in the last 6 months to 2 years because the emotional aspects of the relationship are no longer satisfying.

_____The relationship ended or we now view each other as peers. (Kram, 1988)

21. To what extent do you feel you have impacted this individual's professional and career development?

_____Strongly ____Somewhat _____ Minimally ____Not at all

22. What effect do you feel your role as a ***mentor*** has had on your professional and career development?

_____Positive _____Negative _____Both positive and negative _____No effect

23. Check the appropriate ways you feel you impacted this individual's professional and career development. You may check more than one response:

_____ encouraged individual to pursue an advanced degree

_____ challenged individual to develop the skills and competencies for the next immediate step by assigning tasks and responsibilities beyond his or her organizational scope

_____ helped and encouraged individual to understand the politics of our organization

_____ helped individual gain visibility in our organization

_____ helped individual to recognize personal failure patterns and how to overcome these

_____ nominated individual for special recognition and awards within and outside the organization.

_____ provided emotional support and personal advice

23. **I would be willing to participate in an in-depth personal interview (1-hour in length) scheduled at a convenient time and place for me about my mentoring experiences.**

_____Yes _____No

Thank you for your participation. Please return the questionnaire and signed informed consent letter in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided.

The information provided here will be kept strictly confidential; all of the data and description will be reported without reference to an individual or an institution. No one will have access to the information you provide me.

Rayanne Giddis
5402 SW 86 Drive
Gainesville, FL 32608
(352) 375-8622 – giddisr@cf.edu

APPENDIX C
REMINDER NOTICE

From: Giddis, Rayanne
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2003 10:45 AM
Subject: Research Study

Approximately two weeks ago, you should have received a letter describing my dissertation research on the mentoring experiences of women in administrative leadership in Florida's community colleges. In this letter I also requested that you complete and return a short questionnaire regarding your experiences with mentoring.

The response has been great with close to a 50 percent return rate. However, so far, I have not received your response. I am writing to encourage you to take a moment to complete and return the signed Informed Consent Letter and Mentoring Questionnaire. Your response is important in developing as complete a picture as possible of this leadership development strategy for women in our community college system. If you need another copy of the Informed Consent Letter and Mentoring Questionnaire, please let me know and I will forward one to you.

If you have already done so, thank you for responding. As a reminder, confidentiality is a critical concern to this research and individual responses will remain anonymous.

Thank you for your participation. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Rayanne Giddis
Director, Levy Center
Central Florida Community College
(352) 493-9533 or (352) 375-8622
giddisr@cf.edu

APPENDIX D
SECOND REMINDER NOTICE

From: Giddis, Rayanne
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2003 11:04 AM
Subject: Mentoring Research Study

Approximately four weeks ago, you should have received a letter describing my dissertation research on the mentoring experiences of women in administrative leadership in Florida's community colleges. In this letter I also requested that you complete and return a short questionnaire regarding your experiences with mentoring.

The response to the mailing and follow-up has been great with a 60 percent return rate. However, to date, I have not received your response. I am writing to encourage you to please take a moment to complete and return the signed Informed Consent Letter and Mentoring Questionnaire. Your response is vital in developing as complete a picture as possible of this leadership development strategy for women in our community college system. If you need another copy of the Informed Consent Letter and Mentoring Questionnaire, please let me know and I will forward one to you.

If you have already done so, thank you for responding. As a reminder, confidentiality is a critical concern to this research and individual responses will remain anonymous.

Thank you for your participation. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Rayanne Giddis
Director, Levy Center
Central Florida Community College
114 Rodgers Blvd.
Chiefland, FL 32626
(352) 493-9533
(352) 493-9994 FAX
giddisr@cf.edu

APPENDIX E
MENTORING INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Thank you for agreeing to this interview. As part of my dissertation research for the doctoral degree in higher education administration at the University of Florida, I am interviewing current women administrative leaders (e.g. presidents, executive vice presidents, vice presidents, provosts, campus presidents, and deans) in Florida's public community colleges about their experiences and perceptions regarding their careers and those significant people who helped them. In addition, I am interested in learning about the experiences and perceptions of women administrative leaders in Florida's community colleges as they help others in their careers.

Everything we discuss will be kept strictly confidential. All of my data and description will be reported without reference to an individual or an institution. No one will have access to the information you provide me today.

With your permission, I would like to tape record this interview to ensure accuracy. Thank you.

1. How did you become interested in being a community college president or administrator?

2. Was there anyone you can identify who had a major impact in helping you make decisions about your career?

3. Would you characterize this person as a mentor? Was the relationship part of a formal program?

4. How would you define a mentoring relationship?

5. What were your respective ages and the organizational roles of you and your mentor during this relationship?

6. How do you think the organizational role of your mentor affected your career development?

7. At the time, how did you characterize this relationship? Did you think mentoring was occurring? When did you first become aware that mentoring was occurring?

8. Looking back, how did the mentor help you? Explain.

9. What kind of contact did you and your mentor have?

10. What were some of the ways your mentor helped your career development?

11. How long did this relationship last?

12. How do you think the gender of your mentor affected your relationship (e.g., role model, friend, confidant)?

13. How do you think the gender of your mentor affected your career development (e.g., sponsorship, coaching, visibility, skill development)?

14. At the time, what did this relationship mean to you?

15. How would you describe this relationship today? Has it changed? If so, how?

16. If the relationship ended, why did it end?

17. What would you say were the benefits of this relationship? What, if any, were the limitations of this relationship?

18. How do you think your mentor felt about this relationship?

19. What proved to be the most valuable to you as a result of this relationship?

20. Are there any others who helped you? How?

21. Would you describe these relationships as the same or different than the one with your mentor?

The following questions concern your experiences and perceptions in relation to helping others in their careers.

1. Are you currently involved in a mentoring relationship, as previously defined, with another individual where you are serving as the mentor? Is the relationship part of a formal program?

2. At the time this relationship developed, what were the respective ages and organizational roles of you and your protégé?

3. How and when did you become aware that mentoring was occurring?

4. What kind of contact do you and your protégé have?

5. What are some of the ways you have helped your protégé's career development?

6. How do you think the gender of your protégé affects your relationship (e.g., role model, friend, confidant)?

7. How do you think your gender affects the career development of your protégé (e.g., sponsorship, coaching, visibility, skill development)?

8. How has your involvement in this mentoring relationship affected your career development? Professional development?

9. How does this relationship make you feel?

10. What would you say are the benefits of this relationship? What, if any, are the limitations of this relationship?

11. How do you think your protégé feels about this relationship?

12. What is most valuable to you as a result of this relationship?

13. Are there others that you are helping? How?

14. Would you describe these relationships as the same or different than the one with your protégé?

Thank you for spending this time and sharing your experiences with me. I know that this information will be valuable to my study. Again, I assure you that our discussion here today will remain confidential.

APPENDIX F
PARTICIPANT THANK YOU LETTER

Dear [Interview Participant]:

First, I want to tell you how very much I appreciated the time you took to share with me the story of your mentoring experiences. I enjoyed spending the time with you and you were an invaluable aid to me in completing my dissertation research. By sharing your experiences with me you have added to the knowledge about women's experiences with mentoring and the role that plays in career development.

When we met, I indicated to you that I would forward a copy of the findings to you when they were available. One of the ways the validity of qualitative research is enhanced is by providing the subjects of the study the opportunity to review the findings and determine their accuracy, fairness, and validity. Basically, are the findings credible? Therefore, I am enclosing a copy of the findings of my dissertation study for your review. Please take the opportunity to review the analysis and let me know what you think. You may contact me by phone at (352) 493-9533 or (352) 375-8622, or e-mail at giddisr@cf.edu or rgsapp@att.net.

Again, I thank you for your assistance on this project. My time spent interviewing the talented women in community college leadership was without a doubt the highlight of this project!

Sincerely,

Rayanne Giddis
Doctoral Candidate, University of Florida
Director, Levy County Center
Central Florida Community College

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Rayanne Giddis was born in Pontiac, Michigan, in 1955. She attended the University of Florida, where she received her Bachelor of Arts in sociology degree. Ms. Giddis began her career in community college education at Santa Fe Community College in 1978 working in a variety of positions in student services. In 1985, she was named Director of Admissions for Lake City Community College. During this time she returned to the University of Florida and in 1992 received a Master of Education in higher education leadership under the direction of Dr. James L. Wattenbarger.

Following the birth of her daughter in 1993, Ms. Giddis devoted her time and energy to full-time parenting until her return to graduate studies in the doctoral program in higher education leadership at the University of Florida in 1996. During this period, she served as a graduate research assistant to Dr. Barbara J. Keener, dean of community college relations at the University of Florida, and to Dr. Phillip A. Clark, professor and director of the Stewart Mott Davis Center for Community Education. Following an administrative internship with Dr. Charles R. Dassance, president of Central Florida Community College, Ms. Giddis returned to her career in community college education as the director of the Levy Center for Central Florida Community College in 1998.

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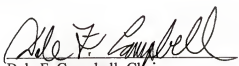

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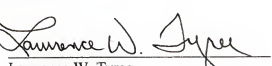

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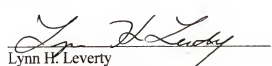

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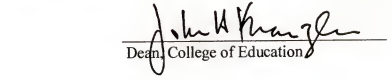
This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the College of Education and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

August 2003



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